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EDITORIAL

A MAGAZINE, A MOVEMENT

The cavernous Seventh Regiment Armory was crowded, the music was roisterous, the speeches were stirring and for the first time in the history of New York parties there were more jumbo shrimp than guests. Three thousand friends of *The Nation*, some from overseas, gathered for the magazine's 120th anniversary celebration last week. The scene was set by a powerful sense of the past; the magazine, after all, has roots in most of the great political and cultural events of its lifetime. But the night was filled with a remarkable feeling for the future as well. The speakers—Jesse Jackson, Bella Abzug, Nora Astorga, Molly Ivins, George McGovern, Ira Glasser, Studs Terkel—looked ahead to the world that *The Nation* will face this week, next year, into the next century.

It wasn't until the party was well under way that we began to understand its meaning as a gathering of people with like minds and compatible moods who find in this magazine a focus for their interests and activities. We are not the world; we are not even the Northeast corridor or a significant slab of Manhattan. But we hope to be a center now for an increasingly self-conscious community of action, independence and dissent. It hardly has a name: old qualifiers like "liberal," "leftist," "progressive" and "committed" seem incomplete, dated and mechanical. What can be said and seen, however, is that the community is more than a list of subscribers to worthy causes. In a way, it engages the causes and defines their worth.

An elderly couple with no special involvement in the magazine's operations flew in from the Midwest to get a feeling of the strength of the gathering. A carload of students from Long Island came, as one of them said, "because this is what is happening." We hope the couple and the kids met, and that they'll stay in touch.

REAGAN FLIPS
Alexander Cockburn

CONTRA POLYGRAPHS
Martha Honey

THE SOUTHERN PRIMARY
Curtis B. Gans

FOREIGN TRADE POLICY
Bill Goold
John Cavanagh

VARGAS LLOSA
Terrence Rafferty

KILLER B's
Andrew Kopkind

RAMONA AFRICA'S DEFENSE

MOVE v. THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

JIM QUINN

Pennsylvania, like most states, has a death penalty; from time to time people are sentenced to die. But in Pennsylvania, as in most states, no one has been executed for decades. In civilized America there is really only one capital crime: exasperating a cop.

The Philadelphia police confirmed that rule last May when, as all the world knows, they bombed a row house in a quiet black neighborhood. Sixty-one houses—three city blocks—were destroyed in the fire. At least eleven people were killed. Bodies were so badly burned that they disintegrated; an exact count is impossible. Six of the identifiable victims were adult members of a local primitivist group called MOVE. Five were children. Police say they had no choice. MOVE was bothering the neighbors with long, loud harangues through a bullhorn. And MOVE members refused to surrender when police surrounded the block and Police Commissioner Gregore Sambor, using a bullhorn of his own, shouted: "Attention MOVE. This is America. You have to obey the laws of the United States."

Police Commissioner Sambor is ex-police commissioner now, forced to resign, he says, by Mayor Wilson Goode, who may be ex-mayor come next election, as a result of a report on the MOVE bombing that found him "grossly negligent" and his own belated admission of culpability. And Ramona Africa, who survived the MOVE fire by running into an alley and shouting, "I give up! Don't shoot!" was found guilty on February 9 of criminal conspiracy and riot. That's kind of a victory for Ramona, who conducted her own defense. She was acquitted

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EXCHANGE.

THE LEFT'S DOUBLE STANDARD

Washington

In their November 30 article, "A Defection in the Family," Kai Bird and Max Holland cannot decide whether I "succumbed to the lure of power" or was "driven by personal loyalty to a few prominent but politically isolated Nicaraguans" in supporting legislation providing humanitarian aid to the Nicaraguan resistance.

There is a simpler explanation. I believe in what I am doing. But Bird and Holland's attack on my activities is filled with inaccuracies. To mention just one, the term "*contra* support group" was a phrase I used once facetiously (like the names we used to coin for solidarity groups) to refer to a shifting collection of people I met with from time to time to explore ideas for promoting negotiations in El Salvador as well as in Nicaragua.

I continue to support the principles that guided my activities in the 1960s and 1970s—in the Indochina peace campaign, in the 1972 McGovern campaign, as Americans for Democratic Action's lobbyist and as an aide to two members of Congress. My overriding concern remains the promotion of human rights and self-determination. However, it is easy to be for these good things in general; the difficulty comes in deciding what policies these principles demand today.

Bird and Holland would be right to characterize me as a defector if today's world were the world of the 1960s. And they would be right in advocating a "hands-off" policy if Nicaragua were simply a repetition of Vietnam and U.S. imperialism were the only kind small nations had to worry about. But the world has changed enormously since the 1960s and now must confront the phenomenon of Soviet imperialism.

In 1968, the Soviet Union crushed democratic socialism in Czechoslovakia, and shortly thereafter Cuba was fully incorporated into the Soviet bloc. By 1975 the Soviet Union was transporting Cuban troops to Angola and, later, Ethiopia. At the same time, the Russians backed coups that failed in the Sudan and North Yemen but succeeded in South Yemen. Meanwhile, the pro-Soviet faction won control of the Vietnamese Workers Party and proceeded to invade Cambodia. In 1979 the Russians themselves invaded Afghanistan, and in 1981 Solidarity—the broadest-based workers' movement of our time—was crushed. Today Moscow is fighting national liberation movements on four continents and has become the world's leading counterinsurgency power. As hard as it may be for certain leftists to swallow, this means the United States need not always be the enemy (and can even be the friend) of national liberation movements.

Soviet imperialism is a global phenomenon, and the Soviet Union a colonial (or, if you prefer, neocolonial) superpower, dueling with the United States. But Soviet society lacks the mechanisms of bourgeois democracies that make possible antiwar movements like the one most of us supported.

The real "dilemma of the liberal-left" is not whether we should "accept the logic of imperialism" or "take a cool, tough and candid approach to national security" (Bird and Holland). It is how to avoid being used by the Soviet Union in its competition with the United States.

This new dilemma echoes one that has plagued the left for decades: how to cope with Stalin's Russia, China under Mao and Cuba under Fidel. As progressive dreams have soured, leftists have too often excused, overlooked or even applauded the atrocities of so-called socialist regimes while condemning the atrocities of right-wing governments.

The adherence to a double standard is one reason the progressive movement finds itself on the margin of American society. Other things also helped destroy the movement: our dogmatism, our tendency to substitute cant for factual analysis and our eagerness to drum from the ranks those with differing opinions, as if we were a sect instead of a political movement.

Bird and Holland label me a renegade on Guatemala for having arranged Congressional meetings last June with Guatemala's Foreign Minister, Fernando Andrade. It is understandable that those who have not followed Guatemala closely would assume the worst about the government of Gen. Oscar Mejía Victores. As Stephen Kinzer (co-author of *Bitter Fruit*, the exposé of C.I.A. sponsorship of the 1954 Guatemalan coup) wrote in *The New York Times* on December 18, 1985: "[The Victores] government was not unlike its predecessors. Political killings and kidnapping continued. . . . But in his determination to allow for elections, General Mejía proved different from previous military leaders." In speaking with severe critics of the Guatemalan regime (whom I had assembled), Andrade did not ask for military aid; he sought support for the electoral process.

In the December elections, the Guatemalan people "overwhelmingly chose an attractive young leader of the center-left Christian Democratic Party, Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arevalo, who built his career on the demand that the military return to their barracks and leave the task of governing to civilians" (Kinzer, *The New York Times*).

Bird and Holland's ignorance of those developments is excusable; less so their display of such ignorance in their effort to discredit me.

The liberal-left correctly criticizes violations of human rights in El Salvador. In Nicaragua, however, similar issues are either not discussed, are dismissed as being less serious than those in other countries, or are explained away in the context of the fight against U.S. imperialism. Serious problems exist in both countries, so why such different reactions?

For the knee-jerk left, Salvadoran President José Napoleón Duarte must negotiate with the rebels; Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega Saavedra should not negotiate with the rebels. In fact, negotiations are needed in both countries, and a settlement in El Salvador is linked to a settlement in Nicaragua. National reconciliation is the answer to both countries' bloody civil wars.

Bird and Holland fail to mention that my real "defection" began in 1982, when I supported a national dialogue in both Nicaragua and El Salvador. At the time, the phrase "national dialogue" referred exclusively to the civilian opposition, and I continued to work against aid to the *contras*. The Sandinistas, however, showed no willingness to negotiate with any of their opposition. Meanwhile the *contra* movement began to attract large numbers of peasants, trade unionists, draft resisters, even former Sandinista government officials.

I have come to believe that the armed resistance to the Sandinista government is engaged in a just struggle if its goal is national reconciliation, and I am convinced that it has widespread popular support despite the fact that its leadership still consists of people selected by the United States. The Nicaraguan revolution was not fought for neighborhood defense committees that spy on dissidents; state-controlled "labor unions" that tell workers they should produce "more for the revolution" but have no right to strike; a regime that oppresses and impoverishes the peasantry and sends its sons to fight a war no one wants, that persecutes the church, censors what people can read, see, hear and say, and that exchanges revolutionary nationalism for blind allegiance to the Soviet Union.

Any U.S. support for the rebels, however, should be conditional. First and foremost, the Nicaraguan resistance must end human rights violations and operate according to established rules of war. Second, it must continue to seek a political settlement in which it would be able to compete in a fair and open political process. Finally, the Nicaraguan resistance must show that, unlike Somoza and unlike the Sandinistas, it is capable of including, not excluding, Nicaraguans of different political views. If these things can be achieved, the resistance will be worthy of continued support from the U.S. Congress and will receive world support in seeking negotiations with the Sandinistas.

Bird and Holland will say this is interventionism. They say my "early career exemplified the liberal-left's use of human rights as a tool to make U.S. foreign policy noninterventionist." But human rights is not a tool. It is a principle to fight for in and of itself, even if

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EDITORIALS.

Shores of Tripoli

Uncle Bully loves to pick a fight. The United States is a nuclear colossus but behaves with all the grace and generosity of a schoolyard tyrant with a slingshot and bat. No ninety-eight-pound weakling is safe from the taunts of this arrogant Atlas. Grenada, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Lebanon, Angola and Libya have felt the sting of sand kicked in their face in this short summer of Ronald Reagan's sway. But no single President or party can claim a monopoly on intervention. Truman invented the modern counterrevolutionary model, complete with napalm and terror-bombing of peasants, in Greece in the 1940s. Then he launched the first postwar invasion of a Third World country in Korea. Eisenhower landed troops in Lebanon; Kennedy blockaded Cuba, began the occupation of Vietnam and sent the C.I.A. steaming into several revolutionary ports. Johnson took Santo Domingo; Nixon extended the Vietnam War to Cambodia; Ford took on the Cambodian fleet in the battle of the Mayaguez; Carter floundered in the Iranian desert—and who can remember all the follies and atrocities in between? All the cases are unique; there's a cause for every war and a reason for every intervention. But the overall pattern suggests that no provocation is too slight to offer America an opportunity

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to get its imperial spirits lifted by attacking, annoying, infiltrating or subverting those who are least able to defend themselves.

Reagan rails against the Evil Empire but he aims his armada at a petty braggart, like a cop who shoots a mugger when he can't locate the Mob. The most powerful naval force assembled in the Mediterranean since the Allied invasion of North Africa in World War II patrolled the shores of Tripoli, popping off Libyan patrol boats and pulverizing land batteries without much fear of contradiction. With $289 billion a year, the U.S. military should have the firepower it needs to subdue the Libyan menace. But the threat seems small indeed. Colonel Qaddafi's "line of death" may constitute an unwarranted constriction of international waters, but it is not much different from similar littoral boundaries imposed by Canada, Italy and the Soviet Union—claims the United States meets with more measured responses.

Politics, not principle, is what instigated this uneven fire fight, and politics on the level of posturing and muscle-flexing rather than global design. The battle of the Gulf of Sidra seems to serve several purposes for the Administration, all of them unworthy. It diverts attention from Central America and draws a veil of national unity over the campaign to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. It supplies what the terrorism theorists at Georgetown's Center for Strategic and International Studies like to call a "national catharsis" to alleviate the tensions built up by successive affronts to imperial pride: hostage-taking, guerrilla wars, strikes, demonstrations and general uppitiness in the Third World. It helps Reagan habituate Americans to the exercise of military power and thus lift the dead hand of post-Vietnam malaise which has hobbled the interventionist impulse since the nation's historic defeat in Indochina. And it's not bad for the President's program in Congress in this legislative election year; a public execution always has a tonic effect on national will and patriotic commitment.

The benefits for Reagan in the Libyan attack are likely to be short-lived at best. Qaddafi enjoys threatening America with terror, and he has doubtless supported many foul acts over the years. But experience proves that retaliation without a political settlement—or military annihilation—is apt to increase terrorism rather than abate it, especially when the offending party has no other recourse for its anger or frustration. In any case, Qaddafi is a marginal figure in the international terror conspiracy that the Reagan Administration has conjured up. The famous Libyan hit squads of a few years back turned out to be a figment of U.S. and Israeli intelligence, and the dreadful massacres in Vienna and Rome last year seem to have originated in Syria, not Libya. Qaddafi is an easy target: he's erratic, feisty and weak. But if the shot misses the mark, its likely to damage the gunner.

The fighters are flying and the bombs are falling in the Mediterranean, but the big battle is still in Central America. Reagan would be happy to take Qaddafi off the board, as the tough guys say in Washington, but the major foreign policy goal of his Administration is the overthrow of the government of Nicaragua. As Anthony Lewis put it, the Sandinistas are Reagan's Moby Dick, an obsession that is driving the Ahab in the White House to extremes of language and policy. This is a dangerous moment not only for Nicaragua but for the United States. Reagan has been surprisingly cautious in his deployment of military force. The invasion of Grenada was a snap; shelling Libya and Lebanon was like shooting fish in a barrel; and the rest of his interventionist maneuvers have been accomplished by surrogates and clients—Unita in Angola, the Duarte army in El Salvador, the *contras* in Nicaragua.

But with the recent successes of the Sandinistas and the reluctance of the House to supply aid to the opposition forces in their Honduran and Costa Rican bases, Reagan apparently believes he must escalate the conflict or lose the campaign. Even if, as expected, he squeezes some more millions for the *contras* from Congress later this spring, he is bound to raise the level of direct U.S. involvement, for there is no other way to keep his dream of victory alive. A dynamic has developed in the U.S. war against Nicaragua that closely resembles the situation in Vietnam in the period just before Lyndon Johnson's radical escalation of hostilities. An Administration in Washington has staked its credibility—has, in fact, defined its foreign policy—on its ability to produce a military solution to a political problem. To back down now would be to admit defeat.

All the other issues of the Nicaraguan situation seem secondary in the face of that major political consideration. The internal policies of the Sandinistas, the role of the Soviet Union and Cuba, the relationship of the Nicaraguan revolution to insurgencies in other Latin American countries—such matters are important only as debating points, topics for *Nightline* or justifications for policies already in place. As in Vietnam, a complex and fluid revolutionary process has been turned into an imperial war, and it is no longer possible to consider the elements of the situation without regard to the general struggle. Censorship of *La Prensa*, the vigor of political parties, the success of social programs, the development of the economy—nothing in Nicaragua is untouched by the struggle to survive against Reagan's determination to dominate.

If there is an opening in the gloom it is the possibility for the organization of a political opposition in the United States against the war in Nicaragua. For a time, people could argue that military pressure on the Sandinistas might effect some regional settlement that would secure the Administration's interests without much money spent or lives lost. Those interests were always contrary to the welfare of the Nicaraguans, to their desire for independence, to their idea of revolution. But other people's problems rarely move Americans against the policies of an administration for more than a moment. Now, however, the war is beginning to come home. We will no longer have the luxury of Op-Ed liberals and cafe commentators to meditate on how things might have been "down there," how one or another strain of Sandinismo should be encouraged, how policies we fancy would win over those that displease. In the future, down there will be up here.

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A Star Was Born

You know, Andy Warhol was right. In a lifetime, each of us has fifteen minutes to be a star. My fifteen minutes arrived unexpectedly on Tuesday, March 11. My agent was none other than that grand old showman himself, Ronald Reagan. I learned of my catapult to fame while holding office hours at U.C.L.A., where for seventeen uneventful years I've taught Latin American history to increasing numbers of undergraduates.

About noon on Tuesday, the telephone interrupted my hoary routines. An enterprising reporter from *USA Today* had sniffed me out to ask what I thought of President Reagan's excoriating critique of an editorial I had written, hitherto tucked away in a small journal called *Nicaraguan Perspectives* [see Alexander Cockburn, "Beat the Devil," March 29]. The news wires soon spread the story across the land. At first it sounded great. The Pres had spoken of a "prominent" U.C.L.A. professor. I began to puff up.

But then my eyes fell on the charges he had hurled against me. The President declared that I was guilty of making propaganda and dispersing disinformation, that I was nothing but a dupe of the Sandinistas.

Imagine being called a disinformer by the very guy who told us, in November 1984, that Soviet MIGs were on their way to Nicaragua; who periodically accuses the Nicaraguan Minister of the Interior of running drugs; who constantly spots plane-, train- and boatloads of guns making their way from Nicaragua to El Salvador. Now he wants us to believe that Nicaraguan soldiers masquerade as *contras* in order to "murder and mutilate" fellow Nicaraguans.

Standing accused of spreading disinformation by the master disinformer himself, I quaked in my professional shoes. Everyone would say, "Well, it takes one to know one," and my credibility would vanish. I rushed to my files. Where was that editorial I'd written a year ago? What had I said to arouse the ire of the world's most powerful man? And if that wasn't enough, the President of the United States had also invoked the Almighty against me. "God help" my students, he had said, promising to pray for them. I faced the wrath of God and President, a formidable duo. Where was that editorial?

At last I found it. The editorial made three points. First, it reported that officers of Somoza's discredited National Guard occupy forty-six of the top forty-eight command positions of the *contra* forces. They commit the same atrocities with which they terrorized Nicaragua during the bloody years of the Somoza dynasty. Second, it emphasized that the *contras* never have bothered to offer a program for the development of Nicaragua. We taxpayers are signing checks for big bucks without knowing what we are getting for our money. Third, it noted that the people of Nicaragua are unlikely to rise up against their government, because the revolution has delivered on its promises to provide health care, education and land reform. Obviously those banal observations were news to Ronnie. "Propaganda and disinformation," huffed the chief executive.

By the time I'd digested the contents of my forgotten editorial, the telephone was ringing off the hook and journalists had tracked me down in the sanctity of my study. Events pushed me into phase two: the realization that I had an unparalleled opportunity to speak to my fellow Californians and, indeed, to the nation at large. My nine books on Latin America have been read over the years by possibly 10,000 to 20,000 people. Now, thanks to a 500-word essay, I envisioned audiences of millions.

Radio stations across the land—in New York, St. Louis, San Francisco—called to record my reaction. My home became a television studio as Channels 2, 4, 5, 7, 11 and 13 filmed the professor expounding his ideas. Cable news picked up the footage to spread those ideas nationally. Offers to write articles arrived. Realizing my fifteen minutes were ticking away, I spoke feverishly.

Calls came and notes arrived from my neighbors; they must have been dumbfounded to catch me on their TV screens, since they usually see me picking up the newspaper or carrying out the trash. Colleagues, friends and a surprising number of people I didn't know wished me well.

But what about my students? My third reaction surfaced: resentment. The President had intervened in the classroom, gratuitously interposing himself between me and my students. The relationship between professor and student is as sensitive as that between doctor and patient or priest and parishioner. How would those lively, sometimes articulate, usually intelligent U.C.L.A. undergraduates perceive this unusual event?

When I walked into my classroom on Thursday, a round of applause greeted me. One of the warmest sensations I've ever felt swept through me. Our relationship had remained intact. For all his awesome power, the President was unable to destroy the fragile classroom. One of my students wrote in the *Daily Bruin*, "As a citizen, I ask God to help President Reagan; Professor Burns' students are doing fine."

I experienced another satisfaction. On Tuesday, Reagan had labeled my warnings about the strong Somoza presence among the *contras* and the paucity of their ideas as disinformation. On Wednesday, the Administration announced that the *contras* must jettison the Somoza connection and proclaim a democratic program for the future. Of course, I attributed Wednesday's announcement to my editorial. Obviously the Commander in Chief had decided I was right. I wondered if Ron would call to thank me.

Wistfully I glanced at the telephone. Mutely it stared back. It was Friday, and I sat alone in my study. Silence pervaded the room. Could I beat the odds set by Andy Warhol? Could I achieve another moment of stardom? I resolved to send the President a copy of my next Op-Ed piece on Nicaragua. It's worth a try.

E. BRADFORD BURNS

E. Bradford Burns teaches Latin American history at U.C.L.A. His Op-Ed pieces have appeared in the Los Angeles Times, *the Los Angeles* Herald Examiner *and the* Chicago Tribune, *among other places.*

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

Representative Stephen Solarz
Chair, Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee
1536 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Solarz,

I realize that your desk must be swamped by the records of the Marcos kleptocracy, but I thought you might want to see a copy of the enclosed report, which has reached me from reliable sources in Manila. It contains the findings of the Magdiwang task force, a committee of expatriate Philippine bankers working in Hong Kong and the United States. Their "restricted" memorandum, which has been given to Senator Jovito Salonga of the Philippine Commission for Good Government, makes the following allegations:

§ In March 1980 Ferdinand Marcos established a special committee to investigate ways in which he might exploit a Republican victory in the American Presidential elections. The members of this committee were Imelda Marcos, Benjamin Romualdez, Roberto Benedicto, Geronimo Velasco, Roberto Sabido (since deceased), Lucio Tan, Rolando Gapud and Oscar Cariño. They were instructed to review U.S. regulations, reinforce personal friendship with Ronald and Nancy Reagan and target salient American interests and personalities.

§ Using resources from tobacco, gambling, banking, petroleum and construction interests under Marcos's control, the team was mandated to give $7 million through third parties to the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign and another $10 million to selected candidates in the 1982 midterm elections.

§ Imelda Marcos and Romualdez withdrew $20 million from three New York banks in September 1984 for the specific purpose of assisting political action committees working for the re-election of Reagan and Bush. A total of $50 million was earmarked for that objective.

§ In one specific instance, Vicente Chuidian of the Silicon Valley corporation Asian Reliability was to be asked to contribute between $500,000 and $1 million to the Reagan-Bush campaign in California. An intermediary is named here, but I don't think it fair to identify him beyond saying that he is a former senior White House official.

The Magdiwang task force also presents evidence about the purchase of more generalized political influence. It alleges, for example, that large contracts were awarded to the Bechtel Corporation by Marcos crony Roman Cruz Jr., with the object of "widening the avenues of contact between Marcos and former Bechtel executives George Shultz and Caspar Weinberger." It further alleges that Benedicto, representing a Manila Bay casino, sought the counsel of Senator Paul Laxalt in connection with the intended acquisition of a Las Vegas operation.

Benedicto, Gapud and Cariño were, according to the memorandum, instructed to find ways in which Marcos-controlled banks could place credits and deposits in the First National City Bank of Houston and the Commercial Bank Company of Midland, Texas, now known as Texas American Bank, thought by Marcos to enjoy close links with Vice President Bush. In his capacity as president of the Security Bank and Trust Company in the Philippines, Gapud was ordered to find ways in which "sure" profits could be made for the blind trusts of Reagan and Bush. The report names the lawyer and investment managers, respectively, of the President and the Vice President. These are, in the case of Reagan, Roy Miller of Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher (a Los Angeles law firm) and, in the case of Bush, W.S. Farish and Co. of Houston.

Other targets for "sweetheart deals" were Interpublic, a firm with close links to Senator Laxalt; Kissinger Associates of New York; Michael Deaver and Associates; William Brock Jr.; Judge William Clark; Donald Regan and Ed Rollins.

I could be more specific. But I do not feel justified in questioning the good name of these distinguished public servants, all of whom in any case employ lawyers who could buy *The Nation* and throw it away. At the very least, however, this document merits the attention of your committee. We know that the Marcos conjugal despotism had acquired vast holdings in the United States—vaster than even you had suspected. We also know that the Marcoses set great store by the cultivation of American friends. Is it so improbable that they sought to cement this friendship in the only way they knew how?

I may be accused of having a suspicious mind, but was there not something fulsome in Bush's 1981 salute to Marcos? Did he have to say, on that Manila trip, that he "loved" the man and his attachment to democracy? Would a few free world platitudes not have been enough? Again, was it absolutely necessary for Ronald and Nancy to invite Ferdinand and Imelda on a full-dress state visit—their first in many years? I merely ask. And was it anything more than stupidity that led the President to defend Marcos against the charge of vote-rigging, telling *The Washington Post* on February 10, "I'm sure even elections in our own country—there are some evidences of fraud in places and areas." Talk about blaming America first.

I think that the contents of the Magdiwang memorandum provide a prima facie case for a public hearing, and I can assure you that many well-informed Filipinos would welcome the chance to testify. Even without these latest allegations, we have sufficient cause for concern. A whole network of unaccountable consultants, lobbyists and political action committees is spread over Washington, providing privileged access to those with money. It would be a dull-witted foreign despot who did not seek to take advantage of this short circuit in the democratic process, and we have the example of the South Korean penetration fresh in our memories. There will, of course, always be those who think that capitalism and democracy are the same thing. But let me not wander from the point at issue.

If I can assist you further, please do not hesitate to let me know.

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ARTICLES.

ACCURACY IN ACADEMIA

Reed Irvine Rides The Paper Tiger

JON WIENER

After seven months of existence Accuracy in Academia, the organization seeking to root out the dissemination of "disinformation or misinformation" by radical professors, looks like a paper tiger. News stories last August reported that the organization had an annual budget of $160,000, plans for a staff of twenty-five and a network of freelance informers at 160 colleges and universities. Matthew Scully, associate editor of A.I.A.'s bimonthly newsletter, recently said: "Lots of things that were announced have never come to pass. The organization has switched gears. We're now a journalistic venture. . . . If someone told me today they were setting up a nationwide network of classroom monitors, I'd say it was a ridiculous idea."

Recent A.I.A. newsletters bear out Scully's account. Virtually none of the stories come from student monitors' reports about professors' classroom statements; for the most part they are accounts that have appeared in print elsewhere. When you call A.I.A.'s number in Washington, the person who answers says you've reached the group's parent organization, Accuracy in Media. If A.I.A. has an annual budget of $160,000, why can't it afford its own telephone?

So far A.I.A.'s attacks on radical professors have, if anything, backfired. The organization's first newsletter reported on "an unidentified midwestern professor" whose lectures on Latin American history criticized U.S. policy in the region. "We didn't print her name," executive director Les Csorba explained, "because when we interviewed her she was cooperative; she agreed to distribute some material we offered documenting Sandinista atrocities." That sounds like a case of successful intimidation.

The professor in question, Mary Karasch of Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan, tells the story differently:

> When Reed Irvine [the head of Accuracy in Academia as well as Accuracy in Media] called me, I said I would distribute their material in the classroom. I do explore controversies, and I hadn't thought through A.I.A.'s offer. But they never sent their material. Then, last month, Les Csorba came to the campus to debate our dean and brought me a copy of the material they wanted me to hand out, along with a phone number in Washington to call to get copies for the one hundred students in my class. After reading the material, I concluded it was inappropriate for my students. My union, the American Association of University Professors, advised me that I should not change my syllabus on the basis of pressure from outside political groups.

The case received extensive coverage in the local media, most of it strongly supportive of professors' rights, Karasch told me. A few pro-A.I.A. letters to the editor were also printed. She said that the entire academic community at Oakland—the student council, the faculty and the administration—all opposed A.I.A. When a television station prepared a fifteen-minute special on the group, its reporters had trouble finding a student to defend the organization, although they eventually succeeded. "My colleagues who go back to the fifties say it's nothing like the McCarthy days," said Karasch. "In this area at least, the people have grown and changed."

The target of A.I.A.'s March newsletter, its third, was Linda Arnold, a historian at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. Although A.I.A. focused on Arnold as a result of a student complaint, the newsletter did not attack anything she said in class. Instead it objected to what she told Irvine when he called to confront her about the text she was using in her introductory course, Howard Zinn's *The Twentieth Century*. The newsletter criticized the book for portraying "American heroes" such as Henry Ford and Douglas MacArthur as "villains."

Arnold recalls receiving a phone call "from someone who said, "My name is Reed Irvine; I work with A.I.A. Do you have a few minutes to chat?" She wasn't sure who he was, and agreed to talk.

> We ended up arguing for an hour, mostly about Zinn's book. Three times he asked, "Don't you think the book should be burned?" I said I'm against book burning. He told me he would like to send somebody down to lecture, with a critique of Zinn; I said no. I told him if he was so interested in the subject he should teach his own course. He said I should be teaching about the entrepreneurial spirit, for instance the people who created McDonald's. I told him I'm more interested in the people who eat at McDonald's. He never asked permission to quote what I regarded as private comments.

A.I.A. urged its followers to complain to the school's president, William Lavery, that by assigning Zinn, Arnold was not presenting "the fundamental facts and interpretations of American history." Lavery told me his policy in such cases is "to let the faculty member know, ask for their response, then support their views and protect to the hilt their academic freedom." He also said he would let the faculty know they do not have to respond to inquiries like Irvine's. In any case, although associate editor Scully says the organization printed 10,000 copies of the newsletter, Lavery has received "only four or five letters complaining about Arnold." The small number of letters reveals a lot about A.I.A.'s weakness.

From the beginning, A.I.A. said that Howard Zinn, who teaches at Boston University, was one of the professors

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whose classroom it was interested in monitoring. But the A.I.A. report on Zinn is limited to a critique of his book; it contains nothing about his teaching or political activities.

The target of the second newsletter, published in January, was David Abraham, the Marxist historian who has been attacked by several members of the profession allegedly for the errors in his book *The Collapse of the Weimar Republic*. Most of the article about him consists of previously published quotations, some of them going back as far as 1983. It does not report any complaints by student informers, but it does include an interview with a professor—Yale University historian Henry Turner, who worked with A.I.A. in order to breathe new life into his three-year-old vendetta against Abraham [see Wiener, "Footnotes to History," *The Nation*, February 16, 1985, and "Letters," March 23, 1985]. In the interview Turner attacked those who criticized his conduct in the Abraham case; he also provided A.I.A. with material from his files. Turner thus became the first, and apparently the only, historian to go against the American Historical Association's resolution condemning A.I.A.'s activities as a "threat to academic freedom." (I attempted to reach Turner for a comment, but he did not return my calls.) Richard Kirkendall, head of the A.H.A. professional division, which is monitoring A.I.A.'s attacks on historians, commented, "I'm surprised that Turner would cooperate with a group like A.I.A. It contradicts his stated position on the careful use of sources. These people are careless in their handling of documents."

The report on Abraham contains a number of inaccuracies. The lead sentence states that Abraham is "a Princeton University professor"; since July he has been a visiting associate professor at the New School for Social Research. The report implies that Hanna Gray, president of the University of Chicago, is a "radical historian," although she's in the mainstream. Turner's ally, historian Gerald Feldman, of the University of California, Berkeley, is quoted as referring to German President Paul von Hindenberg as "Hinderberg." It seems Abraham is not the only one who makes mistakes.

Another A.I.A. target, historian Terry Anderson of Texas A & M University, is suing the organization. Anderson, who won the college's teaching award in 1984, was quoted in an A.I.A. story last November: "I do not believe in the institution of marriage. . . . I'm an atheist. . . . I am not patriotic toward Texas A & M, the flag or America." Csorba and Scully wrote: "Lucifer himself could not have framed his credo any better. But such erudite comments make us wonder just what a man does revere who has no wife or party or country or God." The story is "totally inaccurate," says Anderson. "They never checked any of those quotes with me. They say I'm an atheist; in fact I'm a humanist. They say I'm not patriotic; in fact I'm a Vietnam vet." A.I.A. took the quotations from Texas A & M's *Battalion* and sent the story to "a couple of hundred campus newspapers across the country," Csorba says. "Ten or twelve reprinted it," he adds, including the University of Maryland's *Diamondback*, the *Arizona Daily Wildcat* and Hofstra University's *Chronicle*.

Anderson's suit for defamation and libel will be filed—probably this week—in Minnesota, since the University of Minnesota's *Daily* was one of the newspapers to publish A.I.A.'s story. Anderson's attorney, William Harper, explains, "Although Terry has tenure at Texas A & M, A.I.A.'s untrue depiction of him might affect his employability if he sought another job." Anderson is seeking exemplary and punitive damages. Csorba says: "Our story is accurate. The papers that published it are the ones to be sued, if anyone is."

Only one A.I.A. victim, its first, made the national news: political scientist Mark Reader, a 52-year-old tenured associate professor who has taught at Arizona State University for eighteen years. Reader was singled out not because of a report from a student but because Scully wrote attacks on Reader for a local newspaper in Arizona before Irvine hired him. Thus from the beginning, A.I.A.'s newsletters have been recycling old stories.

Reader is no Marxist; he describes himself as "a whole-Earth person who believes that we are at the end of the old ideologies of capitalism and Communism." In his view, "the need is now for a gentler, a more tolerant people than those who won for us against the ice, the tiger and the bear." It's hard to call that statement "inaccurate." Irvine charged him with teaching "fears of nuclear war, power and weapons." The president of Arizona State, J. Russell Nelson, said he "was not going to pay any attention" to A.I.A., and that was that.

The prototype for A.I.A. seems to have been Students for a Better America, a right-wing group at the University of California, Davis, headed by Les Csorba, which began a campaign against visiting history professor Saul Landau in January 1985 [see Landau's article on page 482]. Asked whether he achieved his goals, Csorba commented: "I wanted to get the university to bring Jeane Kirkpatrick to speak; her anticommunist views would balance Landau's. I failed at that. But I did contribute to an awareness at Davis of what Landau had done."

The most ominous aspect of Csorba's campaign was his distribution of information on Landau's political activities going back twenty years. Landau suspected the material had come from his Federal Bureau of Investigation file, but Csorba insisted that it all came from published sources, including James Tyson's *Target America*, a column by Rowland Evans and Robert Novak and the *Congressional Record*. Much of this concerned Landau's alleged role in the Venceremos Brigade, an organization of Americans helping with Cuba's sugar harvests since 1970, which Congressional investigators subsequently sought to link to "domestic terrorism." It's likely that the F.B.I. supplied material on Landau to Evans and Novak and to the House Un-American Activities Committee, but Csorba seems to have had no direct access to the F.B.I. files.

It's noteworthy that none of the three A.I.A. newsletters published thus far have reported on their targets' past political activities or statements. When Csorba was asked to explain this difference between his campaign against Landau and A.I.A.'s tactics, he said: "At Davis I was on my

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own. My role here is to publicize what's going on right now. We're not concerned about these people's histories; we want to promote balance in the classroom today."

Those who fear A.I.A. believe it may be following in the footsteps of *Red Channels*, the private anticommunist publication which printed information about left-wing memberships and activities of writers, actors and others during the 1950s and became a quasi-official enforcer of the Hollywood blacklist. A.I.A. initially had similar ambitions. Not long ago Csorba, sounding like a junior Joe McCarthy, boasted, "I have a list of over a thousand radical, commie professors I've compiled over the last three years." And Accuracy in Media, which started out as the letterhead and post office box of a right-wing crank, recently commanded an hour on PBS and space on the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times*.

Irvine sees the media and the universities as the two major bastions of liberal thought in America; he hoped the same strategy and tactics that had proved effective against one would also work against the other. But although professors are more likely to say outrageous things than newscasters, the networks are more vulnerable to pressure. No TV show has tenure, and most are sensitive to audience response in the form of declining ratings or cards and letters. Universities offer an amorphous target. Unlike TV shows, they are widely dispersed and do not enter people's living rooms. It is easier for Reed Irvine's constituents to get mad as hell at Dan Rather than at Howard Zinn. Finally, the pace of change and response at universities, unlike television stations, is very slow. For all these reasons, the tactics that won Irvine a respectful hearing from broadcasters have been firmly rejected by academics.

A.I.A. is hard-pressed to find any prominent academic supporters. Its literature gives the impression that Boston University president John Silber, notorious among university administrators for his dictatorial style and Reaganite political ambitions, has endorsed the organization. Silber denies it. Teachers should not expect to be immune from criticism, he says. "No professor, it seems to me, should be intimidated by Accuracy in Academia. If the presence of A.I.A. on campus restrains a professor from distorting the truth, then it will provide a benefit to those who care about the true purpose of a university. If, on the other hand, A.I.A. goes off on witch hunts against professors merely because they hold left-wing positions, it will quickly discredit itself."

Some of the strongest criticisms of A.I.A. have come from neoconservatives. Midge Decter, a member of the National Advisory Board of Accuracy in Media, called A.I.A. "wrong-headed and harmful" in a *New York Times* Op-Ed piece; Harvard historian Richard Pipes, a Polish émigré and former National Security Council Soviet-affairs expert, condemned the group on the ground that "what goes on in the classroom is sacrosanct"; and Reagan's Secretary of Education, William Bennett, said A.I.A. was a bad idea that would only make martyrs of those it attacked.

It's not that the neocons disagree with A.I.A.'s diagnosis of academic life. Indeed, many of the people who de-

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nounced the New Left as anti-intellectual now argue that unrepentant New Leftists are taking over the intellectual life of the universities. They are concerned because the organization's main achievement to date consists of mobilizing the political center to defend the academic freedom of leftist professors from attacks by right-wing kooks. The American Association of University Professors and at least ten other official higher-education groups, including the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians and the American Council on Education, have said A.I.A. is "clearly inimical to the principle of free expression of views by all members of the academic community." Nothing could be more damaging to the neocons, who've spent "inaccuracy." Some targets of these threats have been the right that threatens the integrity of the university by injecting external political issues into academia.

A.I.A. has apparently intimidated a few academics, as have right-wing students acting on their own, ostentatiously monitoring classes and threatening to turn in their professors. But Reed Irvine in effect admitted that the quality of student reports has been low when he told a television interviewer that "students say a lot of things" and that their claims require verification. It may be that many self-selected informers are retaliating for bad grades rather than exposing "inaccuracy." Some targets of these threats have been shaken; others now begin their courses denying bias and affirming their patriotism. But the record of the past six months should reassure them. Midge Decter put it pretty well: "Bias is something that anyone with opinions can be accused of. How can a person without opinions be qualified to teach?"

As *The Nation* went to press, I learned that Matthew Scully has left A.I.A., reducing the organization to a single staff member, Les Csorba. Asked to explain Scully's departure, Csorba told me: "We were very happy with his work. There were no differences between us." Scully agreed. □

Dress Rehearsal For a Red Scare

SAUL LANDAU

In January 1985, after teaching my first class as a visiting professor of history at the University of California, Davis, I opened the student newspaper and read a banner headline on the letters page: "Should Saul Landau Be Allowed Here?" Beneath it was a missive from Les Csorba, head of Students for a Better America (S.B.A.), an organization on the far right of the political spectrum. Calling me "an avowed Marxist" who enjoyed an "extremely close" relationship with "Cuban dictator Fidel Castro," Csorba demanded that "the U.C. regents seriously review its [*sic*] requisites for professors." He concluded that rather than hire me the university should have "brought Fidel himself."

Csorba's letter mentioned obscure events in my life, such as speeches I had made more than twenty years ago, that I would have forgotten if I hadn't read about them in my Federal Bureau of Investigation file, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. The parallels between material in the file and the charges in Csorba's letter were so close that I could only conclude that S.B.A. had got hold of my file, or used published material based on F.B.I. leaks.

After Csorba's letter appeared, S.B.A. members stationed themselves at the entrance of the classroom where I lectured on Latin American history, handing out flyers containing F.B.I.-selected morsels about my life. The leaflets advised students taking my course to beware of everything I said, since my patriotism was suspect. For example, did they know that in 1962 I had spoken at a Trotskyist rally in Berkeley? S.B.A. also placed an informant in the class, whose job was to report on my lectures, reading lists and the film series that supplemented the course—and occasionally to heckle.

The informant asked predictably "provocative" questions, often containing an innuendo about my alleged Marxist beliefs. Although he had not registered for the course, I told him that I didn't mind if he stayed and asked questions. The students sighed or made contemptuous noises when he raised his hand, but I responded the same way I did to the others.

Students for a Better America kept the controversy perking for the rest of the quarter with frequent letters to the editor, occasional leafleting outside my classroom and picketing at the films I showed. Editorials and columns in my defense appeared in the campus paper. Attendance at my classes rose, and students and reporters from the local Davis newspaper urged me to respond to the attack. I replied with Lyndon Johnson's legendary advice: "Don't get into a pissing match with a skunk."

A few of my colleagues on the faculty wrote letters to the editor protesting the smear campaign or told me personally how awful they thought it was, but that was the extent of their efforts. Others explained that the birth of S.B.A. at Davis was a result of Reagan's landslide the previous November, although until I arrived on the scene it had received little media attention. Some said that "this kid Csorba" was a "big blowhard" or "an attention freak." A student told me that Csorba had admitted to him that he had not read any of my books, seen my films or attended my lectures. But it turned out that in his young life Csorba had forged right-wing ties. During a 1984 trip to El Salvador he had praised then-Maj. Roberto D'Aubuisson and had posed, rifle in hand, with government soldiers. Furthermore, I learned that S.B.A. was temporarily operating out of the offices of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's *Washington Times*, was supported by members of the Heritage Foundation and sired by Reed Irvine, director of Accuracy in Media. I realized then that the attacks on me were not a local phenomenon.

Saul Landau is a senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, in Washington.

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When one of my films, *Fidel*, was shown on campus midway through the quarter, S.B.A. picketers denounced it as Cuban propaganda. This 1968 movie had appeared on television and subsequently in theaters. I regard it as a sympathetic portrait of Castro but not an uncritical one. At any rate, the pickets did not prevent anyone from seeing it, but they did make headlines.

Csorba continued his attack by distributing flyers to the faculty in several departments. Headlined "In Their Own Words," it juxtaposed two quotations. The first read:

> We have agents of absolute confidence all over the United States who are ready to undertake whatever actions are necessary at the time of their own choosing. The Yankees cannot even begin to imagine the capabilities we have in their country. You all read about riots in Miami. . . . We can accomplish things that would make the riots in Florida look like a sunshower. —Fidel Castro. Nicaragua, June 1980

The second quotation was from a letter I had written to a Cuban poet. The letter was in the briefcase of my friend and colleague Orlando Letelier when he was assassinated in Washington by agents of the Chilean secret police. Because mail to Cuba is notoriously slow and unreliable I had asked Letelier to deliver it when he visited there. Presumably U.S. intelligence officials leaked the letter to their right-wing friends, who released it to the press. In the letter I quipped that I preferred to make "propaganda for American socialism," rather than "help out Third World movements and revolutions."

Under the two quotations Csorba wrote: "According to sources at the Institute for Policy Studies and the Council for Inter-American Securities [*sic*], Landau's relationship with Castro is described as 'close.' Landau's pro-Castro propaganda film entitled 'Fidel' highlights such a relationship."

I stand behind what I wrote to my Cuban friend, but I must admit that I was amazed to read it juxtaposed with the alleged Castro quotation and followed by a statement describing my relationship with the Cuban President as being close and my film about him as propaganda. "The leaflet makes you sound like a terrorist," remarked one of my colleagues, "as if you are one of the 'agents of absolute confidence.'"

The supposed words of Castro came from a novel written by Arnaud de Borchgrave and Robert Moss, titled *Monimbo*. The authors state clearly that the work is fiction and that "names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the authors' imagination or used fictitiously." When I confronted Csorba with this information he insisted that the attribution was accurate. "There was a tape-recording with the quote on it," he said, and although he had not heard it, his Washington colleagues had assured him that Castro had indeed uttered the words quoted in de Borchgrave and Moss's book.

A friend on the faculty advised me to report the incident to the Judicial Conduct Committee, since Csorba was either lying or had been misinformed about the provenance of the quotation. Having conducted long interviews with the Cuban leader, I could not imagine him spouting such rubbish; more important, if de Borchgrave and Moss possessed such a recording, why hadn't they made it public?

What with the continuing ferment among the student body, the letters to the editor, the charges and my bringing the issue before the Judicial Conduct Committee, the S.B.A. campaign became a running story in the campus and the local papers. A rival campus group, Students for an Even Better America, was formed, and faculty and students alike became more active in supporting academic freedom and my case in particular. Critical articles about S.B.A. began appearing in the press—a *Sacramento Bee* editorial called its members the Beer Bullies of U.C. Davis, a reference to the Adolph Coors Company's funding of the far right—and the group seemed to have far fewer supporters than the anti-S.B.A. movement had. I never determined S.B.A.'s exact membership on the Davis campus.

The group called in a heavy hitter, State Senator H.L. Richardson from Southern California. He was known chiefly as an opponent of gun control and as the man who had worked for the removal of liberal California Chief Justice Rose Bird almost as soon as she was appointed. Richardson announced he would investigate my hiring and demanded that the university turn over my file. The chancellor politely refused and also declined to divulge how I had been hired or who had recommended me. Richardson threatened to bring the matter up "at budget time." The University of California, which conducts a lot of research for the Pentagon and agribusiness, didn't seem too worried.

Richardson's entry into the affair shocked those who had predicted that it would all blow over. Students organized a well-attended demonstration in support of academic freedom and my right to teach. Faculty petitions and letters multiplied in the student and local papers—most of them against S.B.A. and supportive of me.

Csorba was taken to task by the Judicial Conduct Committee, not for having written a vile and untrue statement but for having used the faculty mailboxes without authorization. The committee's main function, I learned, was to enforce rules dealing with cheating and plagiarism.

Reflecting on the events during the ten weeks I taught at Davis, I have reached the following conclusions. A young ultra-right-wing student directed by S.B.A. national offices in Washington had successfully framed a debate about academic freedom by posing the question: "Should Saul Landau be allowed here?" The controversy sparked interest among an apparently apathetic and inactive student body.

S.B.A. had targeted me and posed the issue in such a way as to gain maximum attention for itself. Because the ultra-rightist students had not read my books, articles or essays, nor heard me lecture or seen my films, I had to assume that the attack was not personal, even though at first I thought it was.

I reviewed the reading lists I had assigned. They included ample selections of right-wing material, and I had even offered an ultraright title, *Attack on the Americas*, in the film series. That I was impelled to review the material showed me that I had been intimidated. And I hadn't had enough sense to telephone friends and colleagues for support. In fact, most of them didn't even think to help—with the ex-

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ception of former Senator James Abourezk, who wrote a strong letter to *The Sacramento Bee* defending me and academic freedom—and I was too numb or too stoical to ask them.

For their part, Csorba and S.B.A. had considerable resources. Davis faculty members received an angry and self-righteous denunciation of me from the organization's national offices in Washington. State Senator Richardson had apparently been poised to join the fray, and, presumably, current and former members of the intelligence community showed themselves ready to aid this kind of assault by providing classified material.

After leaving the Davis campus in March 1985, I taught the spring quarter at U.C. Santa Cruz. Richardson dogged me, demanding that the school's chancellor disclose my private academic file. The chancellor refused. More than a hundred faculty and staff members signed a petition denouncing Richardson's McCarthyite actions. Santa Cruz did not provide a good climate for S.B.A. and its kind.

That spring, activism blossomed at Davis. The Central America Committee and the Free South Africa movement were further inspired by the academic-freedom debate, and their numbers and activities multiplied. Csorba graduated and became national director of a new group called Accuracy in Academia, sponsored by Reed Irvine's Accuracy in Media.

I had been the guinea pig for this effort. By attacking me, S.B.A. received media attention and was able to pose its questions as the appropriate ones for discussion. It had not forced me to change my views or my reading and film lists or my lecture style, but I had felt the pressure. And I was not a full-time professor. I had a job to return to. Some of those subsequently targeted by Accuracy in Academia were more vulnerable than I, and some of them have told me that the attacks caused them considerable anguish. It is intimidating to be confronted by angry, militant students who presumably have been spying on you.

Irvine and his student epigones bully in the name of accuracy and balance, but all they care about is attacking liberals and the left. Irvine never chastises the press for failure to write articles sufficiently critical of the Ku Klux Klan or corruption in the Reagan Administration. The far right wants to prevail culturally and it therefore seeks attention by attacking its ideological enemies. S.B.A. got plenty of coverage at my expense.

The next time it happens, and it will, the academic community must expose those unpleasantly familiar people. Any faculty member targeted by them merits the full support of his or her colleagues and the student body. Otherwise, academic freedom will face its most severe challenge since the McCarthy days. Intimidation of teachers can be accomplished—if their colleagues and students allow it. □

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ECUADOR'S FEBRES

Reagan's Man in The Andes

SAM ZUCKERMAN

Ecuador these days is a country with two images, and they could hardly be more contradictory. One view prevails in State Department handouts, in the comments of Western financial leaders and in the pages of the U.S. business press. There the Andean republic plays the role occupied by Jamaica five years ago, after Prime Minister Edward Seaga took office—a doughty little democracy, led by a dynamic president, rebuilding itself with large doses of free enterprise and foreign capital, all the while conscientiously paying its debts.

That is the image nurtured by Ecuador's President, León Febres Cordero. When he visited Washington in January, he was saluted by Ronald Reagan as "an articulate champion of free enterprise." Administration officials lauded the Ecuadoran chief's support for U.S. foreign policy, especially his rupture of diplomatic relations with Nicaragua. Ecuador's scrupulous cooperation with Western banks and the International Monetary Fund won the country praise as a "model debtor" from a member of a steering committee representing 268 of Ecuador's lenders. Treasury Department officials intimated that Ecuador would be one of the first countries to qualify for new loans under the Baker plan, Secretary James Baker 3d's proposal to support developing nations that adopt free-market economic policies. And the World Bank capped Febres's tour by signing loan agreements awarding an additional $106 million to his country.

The other view of Ecuador, almost unknown outside the country, is widespread among its opposition parties, trade unions, peasant organizations and independent journalists. These groups see a country where the living standards of workers and peasants have been cut in order to pay Western banks, where Indians in the Amazon region are shoved aside so giant firms can build palm oil plantations and where land reform programs of twenty years' standing have been halted or reversed. It is a country where the authorities suppress protest demonstrations and where a ruthless President manipulates election laws, usurps the power of congress and the courts, intimidates the press and denounces the peaceful opposition as subversive while he administers his unpopular program. What's more, say independent human rights monitoring groups, it is a country where a crackdown against a tiny, politically isolated armed underground has made illegal arrest, kidnapping and torture commonplace.

Sam Zuckerman visited Ecuador and its Andean neighbors recently, and will move to Lima, Peru, later this year. He was formerly The Guardian*'s Washington correspondent.*

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Febres's predecessor, the reform-minded Christian Democrat Osvaldo Hurtado Larrea, told a Washington audience recently that the current chief executive has committed "grave and systematic violations of human rights and laws protecting democracy." A human rights activist who asked not to be identified described "a climate of personal insecurity, fear and anxiety on the part of the opposition." And in the offices of the Catholic Church–supported Ecumenical Human Rights Commission (CEDHU) in Ecuador's capital, Quito, the files are stuffed with case histories of midnight raids without judicial order, of political prisoners held incommunicado for days or weeks, of beatings and at least a handful of deaths in police custody. "Cases recorded by CEDHU in 1985 . . . show an increase in the number of incidents of torture, . . . of violation of homes by masked agents, [and] of arbitrary arrests aggravated by the sequestration of detained persons in unknown locations," stated the organization's year-end report.

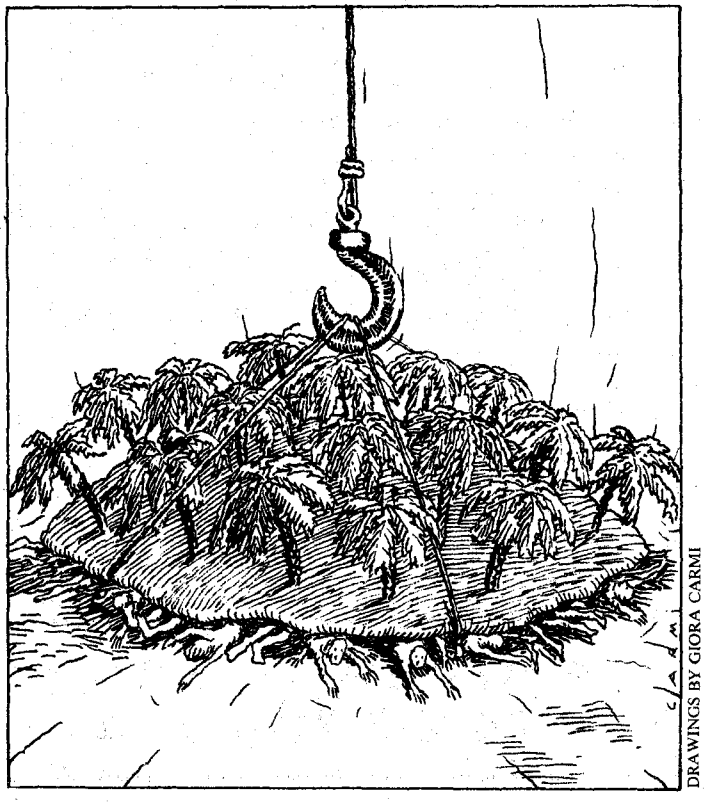
That was the situation in mid-March, when Febres imposed a state of emergency to suppress a mutiny led by the number-three man in the military. Armed forces Chief of Staff and air force commander Gen. Frank Vargas Pazos took over an airbase in the coastal town of Manta and seized a Quito air force compound before troops loyal to Febres stormed the stronghold. Apparently Vargas was moved by internal military disputes, but his denunciation of government corruption touched political nerves. Thousands of civilians from Manta and neighboring towns reportedly mobilized to back the general while, in the capital, students and other sympathizers flocked to his headquarters. Support for the general was said to plummet, however, after he called for Febres's ouster. To many Ecuadoreans, the affair was beginning to look uncomfortably like a coup, and the crusading general like another *golpista*, someone who makes them.

The fight against "terrorism" and "subversion" has become the government's excuse for illegal police methods. Since 1983 an armed underground group named Alfaro Vive Carajo! ("Alfaro Lives, Damn It!") has been active. Alfaro is named after President Eloy Alfaro, hero of Ecuador's turn-of-the-century liberal revolution. By most accounts it is small, isolated and ideologically muddled—its style more reminiscent of Jesse James than Che Guevara—but the group's escapades have given authorities a rationale for repression.

Asked early last year how the government would respond to subversives, Febres's Secretary of Public Administration, Joffre Torbay Dassun, told reporters, "They must be killed like a turkey the night before the feast." Precisely that took place last summer, when Alfaro staged a spectacular kidnapping of a banker in the nation's largest city, the tropical port of Guayaquil. In a preview of the massacre later in the year at Colombia's Palace of Justice, security forces under the personal direction of the President stormed Alfaro's hide-out, killing all four kidnappers and their hostage. Repression worsened after the incident. According to CEDHU, in the second half of 1985 forty-three cases of torture were reported, compared with sixteen in the first half of the year; fifty-five cases of arbitrary arrest, compared with six; and sixteen police raids without judicial order, compared with two. Caught in the dragnet, human rights activists say, have been a cross-section of Ecuadoreans who for one reason or another have had the bad luck to arouse the suspicion of authorities.

One of those is Alejandro Alvear, a 23-year-old musician and dual national of Ecuador and the United States, who believes he was snatched off the street because he plays with a Cuban-style musical group. In Quito last November 13, Alvear says, three men shoved him into a yellow Suzuki without license plates. He was bound, blindfolded and taken to a place he later identified as a farm owned by the military. After about three and a half hours of interrogation, during which he was asked whether he had ties with Alfaro, his captors told Alvear that, since he had not "confessed," they were "going to change the system" and stop treating him so gently. Through an opening in his blindfold, he saw a *polea*, a device used to hoist and spread-eagle prisoners. Suddenly a car drove up and he was delivered to the headquarters of Ecuador's police intelligence unit. A high-level officer there, who was a friend of Alvear's well-connected family, had intervened with military authorities to free him.

Alvear now lives in the United States. He told me that he had no political affiliations and could not explain his abduction other than to attribute it to his liking for Cuban music. His experience was mild compared with other kidnappings by military and police agents. Personal statements collected by CEDHU recount beatings, asphyxiations with plastic bags or water forced up the nose and mouth, and electric shocks administered to the face, legs and genitals, sometimes while prisoners were hung by the thumbs.



DRAWINGS BY GIORA CARMI

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The President's opponents say that the political crackdown and the economic clampdown are inseparable. Laura Glynn, an American Maryknoll nun and an editor of CEDHU's newsletter, said, "As living conditions become worse, there is an increase in repression." Febres "treats all the opposition as subversive," noted another observer, a stance that intimidates many critics of the President's economic program.

Developments in this nation of 8 million are rooted in the intractable economic problems found throughout Latin America. In recent years, deteriorating prices for agricultural commodities that Ecuador traditionally sells abroad have hurt its foreign earnings. Oil, Ecuador's principal export, brought dizzying growth and dazzling wealth to an elite early in the 1970s. But even before the latest tailspin, declining oil prices had transformed boom to stagnation. Ecuador's gross domestic product shrank by 3.3 percent in 1983 and grew only 1.6 percent in 1984. Inflation, which exceeded 60 percent during part of 1984, eroded the value of wages. By last year the country's foreign debt stood at some $7.3 billion, among the world's highest on a per capita basis. An estimated 30 to 40 percent of Ecuador's export earnings in 1984 went to debt service.

Latin countries facing similar problems have responded in various ways. Under its populist President, Alan García, Peru announced it would restrict interest payments on its foreign debt to 10 percent of export earnings and adopt aggressive, Keynesian-style government policies to pump up growth. The governments of Argentina and Mexico instituted austerity programs to reduce consumption, but they have continued to intervene in their respective economies and have tried to maintain a measure of independence from international lending agencies. Brazil continues to seek an accommodation with its lenders but chafes at the strictures of the I.M.F. By contrast, Ecuador under Febres has acquiesced to virtually every one of its creditors' demands and has adopted a radical capitalist strategy to overcome its economic problems.

Febres came to power in 1984 as the candidate of the National Reconstruction Front, a coalition of six right-wing parties. At the outset of the campaign this hot-tempered millionaire businessman with an old-fashioned *caudillo* manner stressed conservative economic themes. After losing the first electoral round, he switched to the slogan "Bread, Housing, Jobs," on the advice of Colombian political consultants. He emerged as a narrow victor in a runoff against Rodrigo Borja Cevallos, the candidate of the center-left.

Once in office Febres retained some populist programs. He began vaccination and housing construction programs and built new bridges along the flood-ravaged Pacific coast. Those bridges carry enormous signs proclaiming in bold letters *Otra Obra de León*—"Another Work of León." The President even visited Cuba last year, which brought improved economic ties between the two countries. All the same, Febres's major thrust has been the free-market program he outlined during the first electoral round.

In late 1984 the Febres government signed a letter of intent with the I.M.F. outlining economic policies Ecuador would follow in exchange for the fund's deferring payments due on the country's overseas loans. The terms were secret, but in the months before and after the agreement was signed, Febres adopted a series of measures like those the I.M.F. generally demands. Foreign investment was encouraged and domestic consumption restricted. The government decreed an increase in the minimum wage that was substantially below the rise in living costs. It hiked utility rates and fuel prices and eliminated certain agricultural price controls. It instituted a partial devaluation of the sucre, allowing most imports and exports to be exchanged at a free-market rate. It reduced duties protecting Ecuadoran industry, ended some domestic production subsidies, eased import substitution laws and reduced the government's participation in public or mixed enterprises.

In the international arena, Febres has emerged as perhaps the staunchest Latin American supporter of the Reagan Administration's Nicaragua policy. Last October, the Ecuadoran chief said there would be no peace in Central America until "legitimate" elections, without "clubbings and violence," were held in Nicaragua. President Daniel Ortega Saavedra responded by branding Febres "a tool of the United States" and criticizing the Ecuadorean's own electoral tactics. The next day Ecuador denounced Ortega's "inadmissible offense" and broke diplomatic relations with Managua—all this scarcely a week after Ecuador had joined the group of Latin nations backing the Contadora peace effort. Ecuadoreans say that Febres almost certainly acted off the cuff and that the affair provides an example of the sort of impulsive bluster he directs against his domestic opponents.

On global economic questions, the Febres administration has been a consistent opponent of collective action by developing nations. Although it is a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, Ecuador has refused to abide by the group's production and price guidelines. Febres has dismissed multilateral approaches to the debt problem and ridiculed the idea of a debtors' cartel. And he has complained about restrictions on foreign investment imposed by the Andean Pact, the treaty establishing an economic community of the nations in the region. Last spring Ecuador undermined the pact by signing an agreement with the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation, which provides insurance to corporations investing in foreign countries. Virtually all analysts agree that the terms directly violated pact rules requiring partial state ownership of any project financed with foreign capital.

To all this, Ecuador's creditors have responded enthusiastically. A consortium of banks rescheduled the country's debt last year on unusually favorable terms, extending for twelve years the period for payment of $4.6 billion coming due between 1985 and 1989. The World Bank offered new new loans, praising the Febres administration for undertaking what a bank statement called "a far-reaching program of growth-oriented adjustment."

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At the same time, the government's economic initiatives have sparked intense resistance from popular organizations. In the gray, chilly towns of the Andes, the steamy villages of the Pacific coast, and the barrios of Quito and Guayaquil, walls are covered with slogans like "No to the Debt!" Febres has responded with an iron fist.

Early last year the United Workers Front, Ecuador's main trade union federation, called a general strike to protest a 60 percent hike in gasoline and transit prices. On the President's order, authorities declared the strike illegal and blocked a scheduled rally and press conference. Reports indicated that at least five strikers were killed and hundreds arrested. A subsequent general strike in March was also suppressed. In October security forces broke up a demonstration against transit increases in the coastal town of Milagro. Two students were killed by police bullets. That same month in Quito, peaceful marchers participating in a continentwide day of protest against the debt were met with tear gas and police batons. Vice President Blasco Peñaherrera Padilla told reporters that the protest was a "seditious act" planned with the "sinister aim of frustrating the reconstruction of the country."

"One can't have public demonstrations," complained former President Hurtado. "They are suppressed violently . . . in pure fascist style."

Febres hasn't arrested his congressional opponents, but he has thrown just about everything else their way. At the beginning of his term the center-left opposition, dominated by the country's largest political party, the Democratic Left, maintained a narrow three-vote margin over the President's coalition in the legislature. There followed a series of clashes between the legislature and the President. In 1984, as provided by Ecuador's Constitution, congress named eighteen members of the Supreme Court. Febres refused to recognize the appointments and ordered the court building sealed off to prevent the appointees from taking their posts. The lawmakers eventually backed down and chose a second group of candidates acceptable to the President. Later, when congress passed a more generous minimum wage law than the President had wanted, he vetoed the measure and set a lower minimum wage by decree.

Last summer Febres succeeded in patching together a congressional majority by luring several minor party deputies into his coalition. Since then congress has routinely approved administration-sponsored legislation. The President seems poised to win complete control of the judicial branch as well. His scheme to pack the Supreme Court and other judicial bodies is currently before congress.

The benefits of bringing congress to heel became apparent last October, when the deputies approved the President's proposal to postpone elections scheduled for January of this year. The balloting for a majority of congressional seats was postponed until June, and certain municipal and local elections were put off until 1988. The government claimed it was protecting the franchise of thousands of citizens whose voting cards had expired. Meanwhile, the Ecuadoran chief has introduced a constitutional amendment that would lengthen deputies' terms from two years to four. If passed, it would further postpone congressional elections.

Asked by reporters to comment on the October maneuver, Osvaldo Hurtado described it, a bit hyperbolically, as "the most scandalous electoral fraud" in Ecuador's history. In response, out trotted Secretary of Public Administration Torbay to denounce Hurtado as "an agent of international subversion." Ecuador seems condemned to further political devolution along these lines. □

Middle East

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

was vexed when the P.L.O. refused to accede to his request, and his anger led to a rupture.

If the King's advisers believed that an alternative Palestinian delegation could take the P.L.O.'s place, that hope was soon laid to rest. An overwhelming majority of the Palestinian people, especially those living on the occupied West Bank, have made it clear that they back Arafat's mainstream faction of the P.L.O. That support was dramatically demonstrated last month at the funeral of Zafir el-Masrik, the assassinated Mayor of Nablus. We witnessed the event and saw it again on Jordanian television. To avoid a clash touched off by the intense emotions of the crowd, Israeli occupation troops wisely withdrew from Nablus earlier that day, so the Palestinians had an unusual opportunity to express their feelings. Hundreds of their national flags and numerous portraits of Arafat were displayed but not one Jordanian flag or portrait of Hussein. That told us that the rift between the King and Arafat must be bridged: each one needs the other to move toward peace.

As for the P.L.O., it has made huge strides toward a political solution in the past twelve years. The provisions in its charter calling for the elimination of Israel have been superseded by resolutions passed by the Palestine National Council (P.N.C.). The proposal to set up a secular democratic state that would govern all of Palestine, which is unacceptable to the Israelis, has been replaced by the plan drawn up at the Arab League conference in Fez, Morocco, in 1982 and adopted by the P.N.C. at its meeting in Amman in 1984. This scheme calls for the creation of a Palestinian state in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, within

Uri Avnery, a former three-term member of the Knesset, is chair of the Progressive List for Peace, a joint Jewish-Arab party with two seats in the Knesset, which advocates Israeli-Palestinian peace and Israel-P.L.O. negotiations. He is editor of the weekly newsmagazine Haolam Hazeh *in Tel Aviv. He recently completed a book about his meetings with P.L.O. leaders over the past twelve years. Hanna Siniora, the editor of the Arabic-language daily newspaper* Al-Fajr *in Jerusalem and its weekly English-language edition, was one of the two Palestinians appointed by the P.L.O. to represent it in a joint Jordanian-P.L.O. delegation. His appointment was accepted by the Israeli government.*

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the framework of a comprehensive peace treaty. On February 11, 1985, Jordan and the P.L.O. agreed that this Palestinian entity would be part of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation—another remarkable concession that addresses Israel's objections to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank. And in Cairo last November, Arafat asserted that "the P.L.O. denounces and condemns all terrorist acts, whether those involving countries or by persons or groups, against unarmed innocent civilians in any place. The P.L.O. as of today will take all punitive measures against violators." Finally, in the Amman talks of January and February of this year, the P.L.O. expressed its willingness to negotiate with Israel at an international conference and to accept Resolutions 242 and 338, on the condition that the United States recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

To outsiders, that condition seems an artificial stumbling block, but the Palestinians consider the resolutions humiliating because they do not mention the national rights of the Palestinian people. Accepting them would be seen as an act of surrender. Thus it is politically imperative that the P.L.O.'s acceptance be contingent on a guarantee that the United States recognize the Palestinians' right to self-determination. The P.L.O. has already scaled down its demands regarding a Palestinian state by agreeing that it would be part of a confederation with Jordan and would be demilitarized. Those were major concessions, and they have not received the attention they deserve.

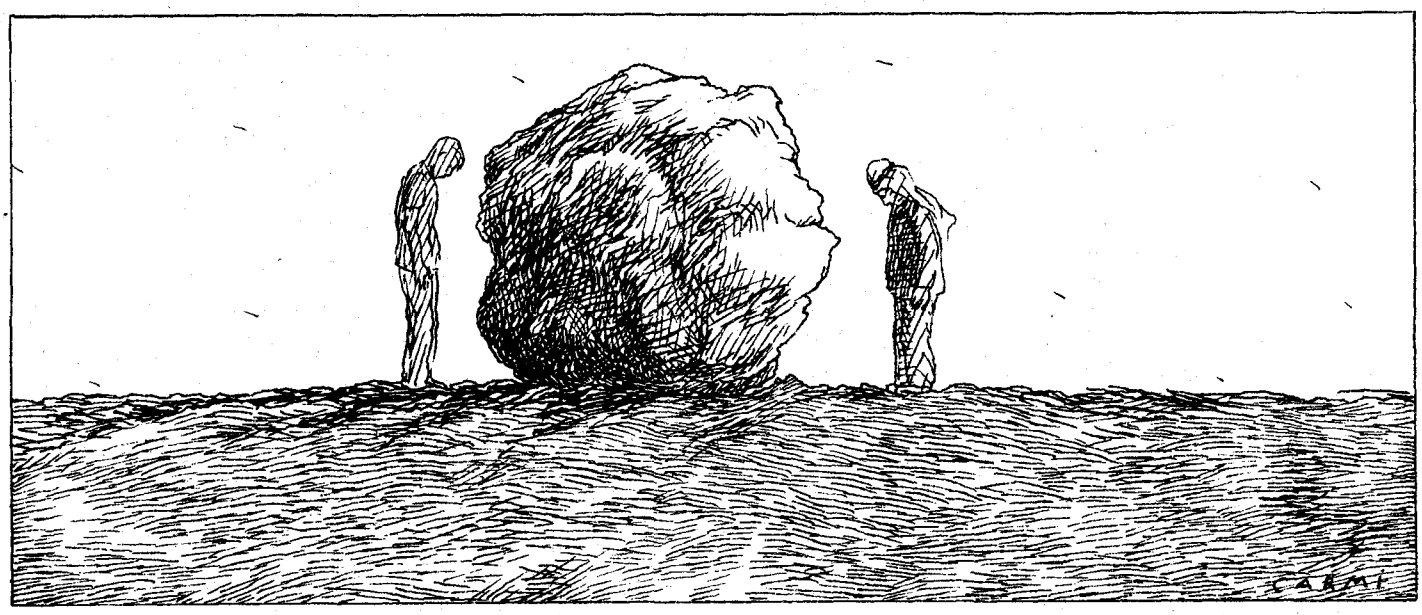
Some remarkable concessions have been made on the Israeli side as well. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shimon Peres, the Knesset has agreed to Israel's participation in an international peace conference as a framework for direct negotiations. Peres has also agreed to accept as part of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation two members who are considered to have the support of the P.L.O. Peres must have tacitly consented to P.L.O. participation in the peace talks, as it is inconceivable that Murphy would have acted on his own. It is also reasonable to assume that Peres would have welcomed the start of the negotiations this year, before Yitzhak Shamir takes over as Prime Minister under the rotation agreement signed by the Labor and Likud parties following the last election. Indeed, if peace negotiations had become a concrete possibility, Peres would have dissolved the coalition government and called for new elections.

All this underscores the crucial importance of an active U.S. role in a Middle East settlement. For its part, the Reagan Administration has made some important concessions. It has accepted the idea of an international conference with the participation of the Soviet Union. In Amman, Murphy agreed in writing that the U.N. Secretary General would extend an invitation to the P.L.O. to participate in that conference, provided that it endorse Resolutions 242 and 338. Murphy also promised that if this endorsement was forthcoming the United States would recognize the "legitimate rights of the Palestinian people," a formulation that Menachem Begin had approved, albeit with some reservations, at Camp David.

In the final analysis the only obstacles to starting negotiations are the United States' unwillingness, partly in deference to the Israelis, to recognize the Palestinians' right to self-determination, and the P.L.O. leadership's unwillingness to approve 242 and 338 without that recognition. All parties to the conflict have come such a long way on the road to compromise that it would be a tragedy if this important but relatively limited issue was allowed to sabotage negotiations.

Talking to U.S. officials during our recent visit, we got the impression that the Israeli-Arab dispute has been pushed far down on the Administration's agenda by events in the Philippines, Haiti and Nicaragua. Perhaps the Administration feels that this problem is too complex, that the issues lack the clear-cut dimensions of the U.S.-Soviet confrontation and that the situation is too uncertain—that all sides should be left to stew in their own juice for a while. We consider that an extremely dangerous attitude.

Deadlock in the Middle East does not mean tranquillity or stability. On the contrary, it breeds frustration and desperation; it pushes the people of the region toward more extreme views. Two years of stalemate following Shamir's accession



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as Prime Minister could mean disaster. A fundamentalist revolution is a possibility in every Arab state; Jewish fundamentalism is on the rise in Israel too. Although the West Bank settlements have not yet created an irreversible situation, as some observers suggest, they have made the situation more explosive. Iran might conquer Iraq and form a military bloc with Syria, which Jordan might eventually join. Even if such an alignment did not materialize, a Syrian attempt to achieve military parity with Israel could provoke the Likud government to deliver a pre-emptive strike. In short, the Middle East could blow up at any time.

More than any other power, the United States has an interest in stabilizing the region. Therefore we find it extremely disturbing that Washington is waiting for the next crisis to occur rather than trying to prevent it by reviving the peace process.

A new approach must be found. We have one suggestion. In 1977, all parties to the Middle East conflict were moving toward agreement on holding a Geneva-type peace conference chaired by the two superpowers, with a unified Arab delegation on which the Palestinians would be represented by Palestinian-American university professors chosen by the P.L.O. That plan was aborted by President Anwar Sadat's dramatic visit to Israel in November of that year, which led to the Camp David talks. It could be revived with modifications to bring it into accord with present-day realities.

Specifically, the plan would proceed in the following manner: First, the U.N. Secretary General would issue invitations to a Middle East peace conference to the five permanent members of the Security Council. The invitation would state that the conference is based on Resolutions 242 and 338. It would also state that acceptance implies an agreement by all representatives to negotiate and to halt armed hostilities for the duration of the conference. Next, the Arab governments would be called on to form a joint delegation in which the P.L.O. would be represented by Palestinians whom it appointed but who do not hold leadership positions in the organization. At the conference, bilateral issues between Israel and its neighbors would be dealt with in direct negotiations in committees: that is, Israel would negotiate with Syria in one committee, with the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation in another, and so on.

We believe that this approach has a chance of success. It would state that the conference is to implement Resolutions 242 and 338. It would state that acceptance implies an render. King Hussein's conditions for negotiations would be met. Israel would not have to negotiate with an official P.L.O. delegation. Syria's longstanding demand for a united Arab delegation would be granted. Egypt, which had negotiated a separate peace with Israel for the return of the Sinai, would have an opportunity to re-enter the Arab fold.

From our different vantage points in Israel and the occupied territories, we believe that our proposal could work. But a prerequisite to its success is a renewed American effort to bring about a Middle East settlement. Washington should choose crisis prevention over crisis management. □

EXCHANGE.

(*Continued From Page 474*)
that sometimes means active intervention.

It would be a grave error for the American left to treat the issues raised in this controversy as if they were matters to be settled by labeling me a defector and by invoking standards of ideological discipline that have no place in democratic discourse. I have found that my own misgivings about the stance of the left toward the Sandinistas are shared among many liberals and radicals. This matter is one that deserves thoughtful discussion. If the left responds by invoking certain undemocratic and discredited traditions of its past, it risks condemning itself to irrelevance in American politics.

Bruce Cameron

BIRD AND HOLLAND REPLY

Washington

Bruce Cameron cries, "Inaccuracies" but mentions only one. That is hardly suprising, given that our article was drawn largely from his own nineteen-page apologia, which he submitted for publication to *The New Republic*. Credit is due the magazine that features Fred (The Hatchet) Barnes for not publishing Cameron's article, which he titled "The Making of a Liberal Apostate—1985."

As for the one alleged inaccuracy—the use of the appellation "*contra* support group"—the term comes straight from Cameron's rambling, incoherent description of his transformation from a left-wing Democrat to a Henry Jackson–style Democrat. To wit: "On April 26, [1985], the group which I had come to call the *Contra* Support Group met to reflect. . . ." We qualified our first mention of the term by saying, "Cameron began to participate in meetings of what he came to call the *contra* support group." If Cameron now wants to claim he was being facetious, that is fine. His objection probably has more to do with the indignation expressed to him by his "shifting" colleagues after his indiscretion.

Cameron's geopolitical analysis would be laughable if it were not so obscene. Soviet imperialism began in 1968? What about the crushing of Hungary in 1956? For Cameron to portray the Russians, in the finest Jacksonian tradition, as international bogeymen is to substitute "cant for factual analysis," to borrow his phrase.

It has been eight years since Cameron first became involved in Central America. Although he still can't speak Spanish fluently, he styles himself an expert on the region while advising and lobbying members of Congress. That is a political, not a personal, criticism. Cameron's approach parallels the traditional U.S. policy of treating Central America like an object to be kept quiescent at all costs. The only Central Americans the United States wants in power are those who acknowledge an unlimited U.S. hegemony—the same ones to whom Cameron can speak English.

As critics from George Kennan to William Appleman Williams have written, the tragedy of U.S. foreign policy is its attempt to remake the world in the United States' image rather than letting the principles we value speak for themselves. The purpose of our article was to describe a specific contemporary instance of this phenomenon. No government is above criticism, neither our own nor Nicaragua's. But it is no double standard to keep uppermost in mind that an impoverished country of 3 million is besieged by the strongest power in the hemisphere.

What is worse than Cameron's ahistoric comparison of El Salvador and Nicaragua is his de facto embrace of the Reagan policy. Can he claim, with any seriousness, that the Administration shares his goal of "national reconciliation" in Nicaragua? If so, Cameron is more than just confused; he is a fool for being used.

As for the suggestion that we wrote the article to discredit Cameron, there really is no need. He is quite capable of doing that himself.

Kai Bird and Max Holland

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Incorrigible Youth

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE AGNEW

A CYCLE OF OUTRAGE: America's Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s. *By James Gilbert. Oxford University Press. 258 pp. $19.95.*

"The first forty years of life give us the text," Schopenhauer once wrote. "The next thirty supply the commentary." It is an observation that could well apply to those aging Baby Boomers who now teeter on the treacherous line between the uncertain and incomplete text of their lives and the even more ambiguous commentary that lies ahead. How will their experience be interpreted? The decades of the 1960s and 1970s have already earned more than their share of commentary, even to the point of weary and dismissive revisionism. But the childhood and adolescent years of the Baby Boomers, the late 1940s and 1950s, remain pretty much as they were: repressed. Only recently have cultural critics and historians begun to wrest the interpretation of those formative decades from the grip of nostalgic antimodernists and ironic postmodernists, not to mention the penny-wise programmers eager to serve up reruns of *Happy Days*.

Fortunately, cultural historians, many of them VCR-equipped Baby Boomers themselves, are beginning to look more closely at such reruns and their original context. The immediate results of this scrutiny suggest a boom—or at least a boomlet—of commentary on American society and culture in the years following World War II. Peter Biskind, Paul Boyer, Barbara Ehrenreich, George Lipsitz and Elaine May, to name a few, have already opened new windows on the period. Not only have they lifted many of the veils with which the 1940s and 1950s were so demurely draped, but they have gathered up a number of loose ends, especially those threads connecting the stereotypically sober 1950s with the psychedelic decades that followed. James Gilbert, a historian at the University of Maryland, gives a fair indication of just how far this cumulative project of reconstruction, reconnection and re-evaluation has come and, perhaps, how far it may yet have to go.

Gilbert's book is subtitled *America's Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s*, a reaction that apparently singled out the mass media as the corrupters of youth. But he is less interested in the impact of mass media on postwar juvenile delinquency than in the notion—he calls it an "episodic notion"—that there was any direct impact at all. Societies periodically accuse their cultures of producing spoiled goods, Gilbert notes. Messengers are often executed for the bad news they bring, and sometimes for bringing any news at all. What must be explained, then, are the latent "social functions" such panics serve and the tacit cultural meanings they express.

The 1940s and 1950s are most commonly remembered as the era of the Great Fear, that is to say, anticommunism. But Gilbert reminds us that running alongside and in some measure inside this hysteria was another anxiety: juvenile delinquency. To be sure, wayward youth and its culture (remember dime novels?) had long been an object of ministerial and professional concern, and Gilbert shows how such fears were rekindled by the disruption of families during the war. But, as he is also careful to point out, these fears did not subside with the war's end. Instead, they continued to mount, reaching a near flash point in the mid-1950s, when Senate hearings, Hollywood films and social scientists' warnings on the subject threatened to displace the cold war in the headlines.

In fact, according to Gilbert, headlines were at the heart of the perceived problem of incorrigible youth because many Americans blamed the media for leading their children astray by packaging news of juvenile delinquency in such attractive vehicles as comics, television and the new genre of J.D. films. To Gilbert, however, the most striking aspect of this circular reasoning is that it should have gathered such force at the very moment when marriage ages and divorce rates were plunging. The ideal of the nuclear family was enthroned, ideologically and statistically, in the 1950s, yet it turns out that there were countless Americans who were convinced that the ideal had been entombed and that the media had dug the grave. Statistical data on juvenile delinquency were notoriously unreliable during those years, but the evidence Gilbert has examined suggests that youth crime did not take off until the early 1960s, when youth culture became the object of celebration rather than revulsion. Given this startling disjuncture between the reality and the cultural image, how and why did so many Americans become fixated on the threat of juvenile delinquency and on the media as its *agent provocateur*? These are the questions that *A Cycle of Outrage* sets out to answer.

Gilbert begins by showing how the specter of homeless youth was first used to blackmail working women into resuming their domestic roles after the war. There followed an extended information campaign (in some cases misinformation) in which the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Children's Bureau, the American Bar Association, the Motion Picture Association of America, evangelical Christians and Presidential hopefuls vied to direct, if not to enter, the national spotlight on crime-fighting. Launched in large part by social-work professionals and reform-minded liberals, the antidelinquency campaign soon "spilled out of anticipated channels" and coalesced into "a wave of protest against modern mass culture as the single most important cause of delinquency." The climax was reached in 1955-56, when Estes Kefauver took the helm of the Senate Subcommittee to Study Juvenile Delinquency. There Kefauver presided over a parade of experts who testified on the evils of comic books, films, rock-and-roll and other mass cultural forms, while his staff read thousands of letters from angry parents, three-quarters of whom (according to Gilbert) laid into the media. Whatever Kefauver's sympathies may have been, the subcommittee itself refused to endorse a monocausal theory of juvenile delinquency in its interim report. At this point, the clamor for national censorship died down—its energies perhaps squandered in the catharsis of the Senate hearings.

A Cycle of Outrage is at its best in

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charting the uncanny convergence of highbrow and lowbrow sentiment on both juvenile delinquency and the sins of the media during those years. Liberal theorists of delinquency and left-leaning critics of the media found themselves uncomfortably aligned with fundamentalist preachers and J. Edgar Hoover on the matter of impressionable youth. Perhaps the most poignant example of the strange bedfellows created by this common cause emerges in the case of Fredric Wertham, an émigré psychiatrist whose long clinical experience in Harlem provided the basis for his influential testimony before the Warren Supreme Court on the cultural impact of segregation. As Gilbert shows, Wertham drew on that same experience and used quite similar arguments when writing his best-selling *Seduction of the Innocent* (1954), which indicted commercial culture in general and comic books in particular for inculcating racist and fascist values in children. Fundamentalists may have balked at this reading, but when it came to comic books—some 60 million of which were sold every month—the oppositional front was a united one, at least in the mid-1950s.

By the late 1950s, however, the front had dissolved. Yet even as fears of delinquency diminished, there were striking parallels, as Gilbert astutely demonstrates, in the ways that the media and their critics envisaged the problem of wayward youth. For as the 1960s approached, delinquency theorists, media critics and filmmakers began to gravitate toward a subcultural, even countercultural interpretation of juvenile delinquency. From Stanley Kramer's *The Wild One* (1954) to Paul Goodman's *Growing Up Absurd* (1960), there arose a new version of juvenile delinquency as a distinctive cultural system imprisoned by and embattled with mainstream values. The stage for the Kennedy apotheosis of youth was thus set in the 1950s, and it is not surprising that the Shrivers—Eunice and Sargent—figure at both ends of the decade's "youth problem": first in the Children's Bureau and then in the Peace Corps and Job Corps.

These changes and continuities lead Gilbert into the heart of his argument, namely that the debate over the media and juvenile delinquency was itself a symptom of a deeper ambivalence about modernity. In this instance, that ambivalence arose over the form and content of a new 1950s youth culture, one in which more and more adolescents were simultaneously confined to the developmental moratorium of high school and invited to sample the adult promise of consumerism: cars, clothes, liquor, films, music and sex. Youth culture thus acted out the democratic promise of mobility extended to it by the media, so it is only natural that in doing so it opened up just those "hidden injuries of class" that consumerism was supposed to heal. As Gilbert argues, the vendetta against the media's role in juvenile delinquency owed a good deal of its energy to outright class hostility, a resentment directed not only at the trivialization of elite values but at the upward percolation of blue-collar values as well. Here, the cycles of outrage look suspiciously like Harley-Davidsons.

Unfortunately, at the point where Gilbert's argument seems most plausible and provocative, his evidence is thinnest. Tied as it is to an older tradition of intellectual history, the book can only speculate about the needs and motives of the aroused public. Only three or four examples from the flood of panicky letters to the Senate subcommittee are discussed here. And though Gilbert shrewdly "decodes" a few of the more important J.D. films of the epoch (such as *Rebel Without a Cause* and *Blackboard Jungle*), the analysis is inevitably perfunctory, given his intellectual priorities. Even when he points to the triumph of the market economy in emancipating the film industry from the burden of the family film and youth from the burden of delinquent labeling, his focus remains firmly fixed on a single pioneer of youth marketing, Eugene Gilbert, instead of on the practices and products of that culture as a whole. *A Cycle of Outrage* is a curious chronicle, then; its very success in unmasking the opportunism of opinion leaders invites the reader to turn away from the narrative to look for the unexamined cultural changes that offered such opportunities.

There is, of course, much to be said for an exploration of opportunism in the 1950s, not to mention the 1980s. Indeed, one of the lingering images in Gilbert's sobering story is that of the enterprising émigré media sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld pleading for more research money before the Senate subcommittee and citing the positive impact of his earlier racketeering investigations. A more whimsical tableau is that of William M. Gaines defending the *Grand Guignol* effects of his *Horror*

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magazine before Kefauver, in much the same ironic way that Zero Mostel was to defend himself before HUAC. Gaines, it should be said, was also the publisher of *Mad*, a purveyor of mass-cultural criticism far more influential (at least among males) than the writings of Dwight MacDonald, Herbert Marcuse and Theodor Adorno combined. Indeed, one could take the evolution of *Mad*'s affectionate critique of the media as marking the gradual success of mass acculturation, a far more quiet, almost subliminal phenomenon than that of the antidelinquency debate.

Accommodation through resistance, freedom through self-censorship—these are the contradictions of the 1950s that Gilbert's study throws into relief. And they are eminently relevant lessons today, as one watches the antipornography campaign produce its own share of strange bedfellows. The 1950s fascinate us for a number of reasons, but among them are the mysterious mechanics of self-repression—what at the time was called, borrowing from Sartre, "bad faith." In this respect, Gilbert clearly has the experts' number. But as to the larger public, he has only statistics, and those statistics show, if anything, that people continued to blame the family for delinquency and to trust the media, much as today. This is not to say that the delinquency question was not a touchstone for other issues, not least for the solvent effects of a market economy. If anything, the gap between private polls and public politics supports Gilbert's hunch about episodic notions and their displacement functions. Still, the cultural and economic dimensions of motive remain something more gestured at than treated in *A Cycle of Outrage*.

In some ways it is churlish for a reviewer to reproach an author for not working the ground he has so effectively cleared of underbrush, just as it is easy to suggest that someone *else* undertake the Augean task of deconstructing thousands of crank letters written to Senate subcommittees. But crankiness is part of the mystery of the "complacent" 1950s that needs to be unlocked. And if we acknowledge that no single person can do this, we can appreciate James Gilbert's fine study, which, when coupled with the writers I've already mentioned, marks an important beginning. After all, the text of the Baby Boom is now finished. If Schopenhauer was right, we have at least thirty more years of commentary. □

Flirting With Freedom

JAY TOLSON

BOHEMIAN PARIS: Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830–1930. *By Jerrold Seigel. Elisabeth Sifton Books. Viking. 453 pp. $25.*

Why limit bohemia to a time or place? What about the rowdy students who made up their own subcultures within the great medieval university towns, the wandering troubadours of Provence, the Grub Street hacks of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century London, the beatniks of the 1950s? Weren't all of these bohemians, committed to art or at least to estheticism, scornful of respectability and willing to live (if only temporarily) beyond its pale? Then, of course, there was that most recent bohemia, the counterculture of the 1960s, described by Theodore Roszak in his somewhat breathless account of the youth culture and politics of that decade. A glance at the *longue durée* suggests that most ages have had their pockets of cultural resistance, their Mimis and Rudolfos.

Jerrold Seigel acknowledges the temptation to view his subject as timeless, but he has resisted it. It was no coincidence, he argues, that a culture which we can properly call bohemian began to take on its distinctive features in the capital of France during the first third of the nineteenth century. Important transformations in the political and social spheres were then under way: the French bourgeoisie, the great beneficiary of the revolution of 1789, was, after some political setbacks, coming more confidently into its own. The 1830 revolution had tossed out the Bourbons and their aristocratic supporters and installed what came to be known as the Bourgeois Monarchy. This regime was itself to drift rightward during its eighteen-year career, but it began by

Jay Tolson is the literary editor of the Wilson Quarterly.

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embracing the progressive liberal program—the extension of the franchise and civil liberties, the dismantling of all vestiges of privilege, in short, the opening up of French society.

To be sure, the bourgeoisie was no monolith; its members ranged widely in wealth and social standing. Politically, as Seigel reminds us, it spoke with many voices. Championing small shopkeepers, artisans and peasants, the progressives (called the Party of Movement) frequently came into conflict with the wealthy and increasingly powerful urban bourgeoisie. The latter, called the Party of Resistance, often allied themselves with surviving members of the Old Regime to thwart the liberal agenda. The liberals fought back, sometimes violently, as in the revolution of 1848 and the Commune of 1871.

This struggle, lasting well into our century, had its counterparts in what Seigel calls "the realms of consciousness and culture," nowhere more dramatically than in bohemia itself. By dismantling the old collectivities (estates, guilds, councils), the bourgeois transformation of society gave individuals unprecedented freedom, but it also exposed them to a range of psychic maladies now commonly associated with modernity—anomie, alienation, loss of identity. These not-so-discrete afflictions of the bourgeoisie, these profound ambivalences about the very terms of modern life, were in turn, according to Seigel, "the constitutive elements of Bohemia." He sets forth his thesis in equally certain terms:

> Bourgeois progress called for the dissolution of traditional restrictions on personal development; harmony and stability required that some new and different limits be set up in their place. Where were the limits to be drawn? At what point did personal cultivation cease to be beneficial or acceptable to the society that sponsored it? Bohemia grew up where the borders of bourgeois existence were murky and uncertain. It was a space within which newly liberated energies were continually thrown up against the barriers being erected to contain it, where social margins and frontiers were probed and tested.

This is an enormously useful approach to a complex phenomenon, not least because it allows Seigel to cast an Apollonian light on what is essentially a Dionysian spectacle. It also brings together a dazzling assortment of individuals, from such well-known figures

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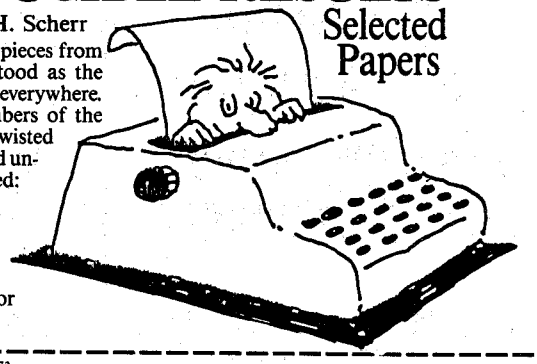

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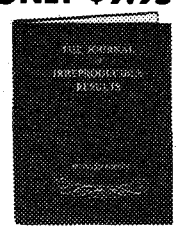

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as Baudelaire, Courbet, Zola, Manet, Verlaine and Rimbaud to such relatively obscure figures as the writer Henry Murger and the cabaret owner Emile Goudeau.

Although a lesser light, Murger plays a key role in Seigel's history. His newspaper sketches, collected in *Scenes of Bohemian Life*, as well as his 1851 drama, *Bohemian Life*, provided Puccini with the raw material for *La Bohème*. More important, though, was the shape of Murger's own life. It began, significantly, in the realm between the working class and the bourgeoisie; his father was a concierge and tailor, but his mother, an ambitious woman, pushed young Henri (he later Anglicized the name) to emulate the ways of the more prosperous inhabitants of their building. Murger's brief life (1822-61), replete with ups and downs and near brushes with respectability, was largely spent in a nocturnal world of writers, prostitutes, criminals and political radicals (one of his friends wrote the "Internationale"). It also embodies all those conflicts and tensions that Seigel sees as definitive of the bohemian existence.

Like other bohemians, Murger wrestled with questions that most respectable members of the bourgeoisie attempted to put aside in order get on with the business of living: Where did one fit in this bustling new society? What were the respective roles of work and pleasure? How did one preserve individuality in a world that reduced everything to market values? Was the cultivation of self a valid goal in life—or, indeed, the only one? Living out possible answers to these questions was the essence of bohemian life: life as theater, as a work of art. Self-examination and self-cultivation, experimentation with a wide variety of social (and sometimes sexual) roles, pushing Romantic egotism to its limit, living dissolutely but working at one's art—these were the traits of bohemia's citizens.

Few people's lives could have been as quintessentially bohemian as Murger's, but that doesn't weaken Seigel's case. He is equally interested in those figures who had one foot in bohemia and the other in bourgeois respectability. Moving between different worlds, such types in fact more neatly reinforce his notion of the bohemian-bourgeois symbiosis.

Take Baudelaire. Arguably the greatest French poet of his century, he did his time in bohemia as a young man but was never fully of it. In fact, he viewed it—this rich boy who quickly squandered a sizable inheritance—as a tawdry society, incompatible with his own dandified elegance. He also had other misgivings about it. In his critical writing and, to an extent, in the practice of his own art, Baudelaire was a classicist, committed to discipline, form and a clear separation of the artist's personality from his work. However Romantic his own subject matter and themes, his urban realism and his fascination with degradation and evil, he distrusted bohemia's identification of the artist with his work. To Baudelaire, the idea that one's life could itself become a work of art was a fuzzy piece of heresy, and potentially disastrous for the future of art.

Yet—and it is this ambivalence that plays so well into Seigel's argument—Baudelaire could never thoroughly disengage himself from bohemia. His imagination needed that world. The broader bohemian experience served him in some of the same ways his experiments with hashish did: both broke down perceptual barriers, enlivened fancy, led to a kind of disintegration (or multiplication) of the self; but both were dangerous because they could destroy objectivity and discipline. Baudelaire chose to live two lives—at times, that of the aristocratic dandy, aloof and self-possessed; at others, that of the reckless bohemian.

The case of Baudelaire is also important to Seigel in the way it presages the main lines of development within the artistic avant-garde through Dadaism and Surrealism, particularly as those lines were influenced by the bohemian subculture. While Seigel is attentive to changes and shifts in outlook within the avant-garde, he sees it as consistently concerned with the question that haunted Baudelaire—the flimsy boundary beween art and life. Ultimately, of course, this would lead to an uncertainty about the status of art objects, as shown in the work of Marcel Duchamp. What went on around the making of art began to matter almost as much as the art objects themselves. Hence the growing importance of manifestoes, such as those issued by André Breton during the 1920s and 1930s. Bohemian artists were perhaps the first to assume responsibility for establishing a context for their work.

It was also in bohemia that the problematic bonds between art and consumer culture were formed. They had to be formed, unless the bohemian artist intended to starve, as a good many almost did. Seigel shows that the commercialization of bohemian culture oc-

AWAY FROM YOU

Sounds of crickets and chickadees
A wasp crawling on the inside of the porch screen
Plaintive small whistle of a white-crowned sparrow
Morning cicadas in the trees by the hot garden
I think of holding gently a tight fistful of your
    black hair and kissing you
A house chair left outside in the sun by the tomatoes
You stood me before the doors I'd kept closed
A jay honking and lecturing, won't stop, in the
    cedars—like me
A huge black ant wobbling by as it carries another
You have been the way that was opened for me
Motionless planks slanted against the cabin-side
    and an empty tin bucket under them
Against you I've limped till I could walk again
    and then beside you walked
Till hurt and limping; and stayed, even when
    you did the hurting
Whatever wildflower blossom you are, I'm still
    not sure of your name
Weathered wood, new blooms, quiet peace, leaning
    tree, the open cabin door
Everything, when I am in my thoughts of you,
    begins to signify
I want to be, I want to have been,
    some of this to you

Reginald Gibbons

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curred most visibly in the rise of cabaret society during the decades just after the Commune of 1871—the years when "the fin de siècle shaded off into the Belle Epoque." Cafes were not new features of bohemia, but their function changed. While bohemians once chose their haunts in order to be apart from the bourgeois, they now chose them in order to mingle with the larger society. Seigel explains how such cabarets as Chat Noir, started by a minor poet named Emile Goudeau, became centers of publicity as well as of entertainment. They were often associated with journals or small newspapers which supported artistic trends and movements. They served as galleries for little-known painters as well as stages where performers like Aristide Bruant could shock and delight the bourgeois with their slangy lyrics. The cabarets of Montmartre, like the department stores which were sprouting in Paris, were new sites of exchange, where demands and desires were created and satisfied on the spot.

But cabaret society did not simply fashion a new class of culture consumers. The artists themselves were affected by these new settings and by the clientele they encountered. Although Seigel gives him too little attention, no artist could better illustrate this sensitivity to the values, tempo and energies of bourgeois life than Toulouse-Lautrec, whose work provoked uneasiness about the distinctions between commercial and high art. Erik Satie's "furniture music" (a rough prototype of Muzak) was an ironic and serious attempt to turn music into "an object of pure utility," thereby satisfying what he believed commercial society desired.

Deft as Seigel is at marshaling his dramatis personnae, he cannot avoid a certain monotony. Various lives are sketched to show how they illustrate the general theme, and soon people begin to merge with one another. This flaw would not deserve mention were it not related to the book's underlying political argument. Like Carl Schorske in his *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, Seigel hopes to understand how culture behaves in relation to politics. He is concerned, more specifically, with how culture variously deflects, absorbs, reshapes and often generates political energies. The political order in question is a liberal one, but Seigel is also interested in its challengers on the right (monarchists like Maurice Barrès, for example) and on the left (anarchists like Pierre-Joseph

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Proudhon and Communard Jules Vallès).

Bohemia, we learn, frequently fueled political dissent. It was Baudelaire's affiliation with bohemia which turned this usually apolitical man into an avid champion of the revolution of 1848. And many bohemians played leading roles in the Commune of 1871. The marginality of the bohemian existence made its denizens natural *contestateurs*, if not necessarily the most reliable of revolutionaries, as Karl Marx ruefully observed.

But bohemia also siphoned off a great deal of discontent which might have found political expression. For one thing, it provided a place—a community, even an identity—for those who could not fit in elsewhere. It was particularly hospitable to those who had been born into poor or middling families but were educated (thanks to the efforts of liberal regimes) to expect better things. Bohemia, by blurring class distinctions, muted inevitable class resentments. And to the extent that bohemian styles seeped into the larger society, they helped blur distinctions there as well.

Seigel is not, however, urging even a modified Marcusean analysis. He is not saying that an emerging mass culture (with its heart in bohemia) adeptly absorbed all political unrest, tamed and ultimately transformed it into a support of the dominant political order. His view is more optimistic, no doubt because he views the liberal regime more sympathetically than Marcuse or most Marxists.

We get a sense of Seigel's politics from his sympathetic interpretation of the life and work of the painter Gustave Courbet, who clearly matters to cultural historians of this period. T.J. Clark, in his brilliant study of the painter, *Image of the People*, works hard to enlist him into the ranks of political radicals. He argues, moreover, that only those bohemians who supported the radicals were true bohemians (unlike such false fellow-travelers as Henry Murger). Courbet's position was confirmed by his support of the revolutionaries during the uprising of 1848.

Seigel rejects this argument, first because he finds it denies a pervasive political ambivalence within bohemia and second because it ignores facts. Baudelaire sided with the Revolution of 1848 yet had no lasting allegiance to radical politics. Was he a true or false bohemian? Seigel also has a different view of Courbet. He sees him as the representative of those bourgeois who remained committed to the ideals of their first revolution, the bourgeois of the Party of Movement. Seigel interprets such paintings as the 1850 *Burial of Ornans*, with its starkly realistic depiction of a range of social types, as favorable commentaries on the fluidity and openness of bourgeois society at its best. The notables who are present at the grave have no more privileged a place in the burial painting than do more common folk; the gravedigger is actually the work's focal point. Judged by his art, Seigel concludes, Courbet was a persuasive spokesman for the best impulses of the liberal bourgeoisie.

Seigel's affectionate portrait of Courbet suggests his own liberal stance. But why should this pose a problem? I think it does only to the extent that we now have doubts about the liberal vision of history—its optimism, its faith in progress, its rather utilitarian regard for virtually everything, including those things most closely approaching the realm of (dare we say the word?) spirit.

Seigel's argument is an important, even necessary, one. It is necessary because it helps counter the elegantly shaped but highly tendentious arguments of neoconservative historians like Gertrude Himmelfarb. She and others, it seems, are determined to prove that those artists and intellectuals who didn't live like proper bourgeois—such as the Bloomsbury group—have had a baleful influence on Western culture and society.

Seigel's excellent book does provide a corrective to such narrowly moralistic readings of cultural renegades, but it is finally a little too timid in its apologia for bohemia, too determined to justify its usefulness to the developing liberal order. A cultural pessimist, or even someone only occasionally prone to such pessimism, might bristle at the Whiggish undertones of Seigel's conclusion: bohemia, he writes, proved "that individuals in modern society can explore forms of action and experience, enter new territories of personal and social life, without cataclysm or revolution." Doesn't this say that bohemia's function is to serve the peaceful march of progress? Isn't this reductive in its own way?

Bohemia was a real, physical site, a place, as Seigel is fully aware. Yet he seems to ignore a great implication of this fact. Bohemia allowed like-minded people to come together in a community dedicated, among other things, to resisting the psychological and spiritual flattening of the modern age. Bohemia was one of the last theaters in which older ideas about civilized life—life as *paideia*, as ongoing education—could be acted out. Why, then, seek to justify bohemia according to its contribution to the larger society? Why not judge societies by how well they sustain their bohemias? The passing of France's bohemia, and its less brilliant successors in other countries, might cause Seigel a little more concern than it does. □

ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

François Boucher

Pastoral fantasy survives vestigially in French consciousness chiefly, I think, in the name Folies-Bergère and in the language of that institution's costumes and entertainments. The frilled and feathered garments of its prancing vedettes are vulgar descendants of the ribboned improbabilities that shepherdesses wore in eighteenth-century paintings, where they also chose to show their pretty bosoms and to dance and sing away the cares and hours of life. These shepherdesses's follies have no iconographic connection with the sheeptenders prominent in Barbizon painting in the nineteenth century—honest agrarian toilers shown bent against the wind or standing under stormy skies, watching over the sources of wool and mutton on which they depended for their marginal if picturesque livelihood. Such follies as the Barbizon shepherds may have been capable of would have had to do with colic, lambing, foxes or the propensity of their dim charges to stray, but certainly with nothing that could be classed as frivolity, which defines the insubstantial essence of the comely personages shown with token lambkins in the characteristic eighteenth-century pastoral landscape. Those same personages, in different costumes and with different attributes, also turned up as godlings and goddesses in mythical allegories by the same painters for the same clients. But it is the fantasized bucolic landscape, with rosy shepherdesses and fluffy sheep, that epitomizes the high art of the reign of Louis XV. It says something

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profound about that civilization that its leading official artist, François Boucher, should have served as purveyor of such largely innocent images to as dissolute, cynical and opportunist an elite as the world has ever known.

Boucher's patrons lived the lives ordinary people fantasize about: lives of luxury, power, sensual indulgence, elegance, distraction, leisure and wit. What they fantasized about was a distant innocence: the carefree existence of living dolls frolicking with happy animals through feathery groves, by clear waters, under blue silk skies with clouds as soft and white as toy sheep, in sweet landscapes punctuated by the romantic melancholies of classical ruins—picturesque reminders of the transience of worldly power. There is not even much eroticism in these Arcadias, but an almost virginal sensuality: a ballet of indolent flirtation in a setting of curls and flowers. Plato defined the despot as one who seeks to live out in action what but haunts the dreams of ordinary persons. It is clear that he believed despotism a form of madness, which after all consists in an incapacity to keep reality and fantasy distinct. That Marie Antoinette, in the next reign, sought to enact the fantasies her predecessors only contemplated in tapestries and tableaux—that she and her attendants should have pretended they were milkmaids—is a sign of her power and instability. But even so, it is a startling inversion of values that the Queen of France could aspire to the life and being of women who might have tried to soften harsh realities by imagining what it would be like to be a queen. The Queen's diary at Rambouillet is a Rococo grotto embellished with milk jugs fabricated by the royal porcelain works of Sèvres, with little correspondence to rustic reality. I suppose even the lambs and kids were shampooed, though the courtly eighteenth-century nose was used to rude aromas.

Now one cannot pretend that pastoral yearnings figure much in the fantasy life of present times, and visitors to the celebratory exhibition of François Boucher at the Metropolitan Museum of Art until May 4 (and at the Detroit Institute of Arts May 27 to August 17) are certain therefore to find the work paradoxically difficult for a painter otherwise so accessible and concerned to give pleasure. Perhaps the first thing to realize is that even in its time Boucher's world was appreciated as a make-believe one—the representation of a universe connected to the actual universe only by repudiation. It strikes me that his are among the first works of pure imagination in Western art, for while painters had always been required to imagine the scenes of sacred history, they had no doubt that these were part of real history. In any case, it would be wise for the visitor to hold the fantasies, for a moment at least, at a distance, and concentrate on what in Boucher is immediately available to contemporary appreciation: the extraordinary manner in which he handled paint. One can find one's way into the painting through the paint itself, for Boucher's touch is unparalleled in the history of art, and the movement of his brush emblemizes the visions he was able to transact in the spaces of the imagination. The surfaces give tangible promise of the sensuous possibilities behind them.

Compare him, to begin with, with Watteau, whose paintings he engraved when a young artist, and of whom he executed a portrait believed to be imaginary, since there is no evidence that the two men ever met. Then compare him with his prize student, Fragonard. These three define three moments of a period of remarkable artistic expression that began with the death of Louis XIV, when the court was transferred from Versailles to Paris under the Regency and when the dour austerities of official painting, dense with the absolute authority of its patron, gave way to something more interior and more intimate, more sinuous and more sensuous, suited to a life where frivolity was elevated to a cosmic principle and pleasure became the duty of power. To be sure, the country had to be run: solutions had to be found for its fiscal desperations, treaties had to be negotiated, wars fought, marriages arranged. But the imaginative tapestry of life in the Tuileries was of dancing and picnics, boating parties and tennis games, the interchange of secret notes, whispered amours and confessions to one's lady-in-waiting, the pampering of flossy dogs, kisses stolen behind the garden statuary, the flying skirts of squealing girls on high, garlanded swings, serenades and stifled giggles, the circumvention of chaperones in a leafy world of rosebuds and grapevines, lakes and pergolas, trellises and Italianate niches, achingly gentle lawns and bowers soft as beds. This period came to its end when the celebration of domestic virtue, as in the paintings of Chardin and

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Greuze, implied a different private morality, and when public morality began to censure voluptuousness through the classical severities of Jacques-Louis David, which announced the revolution and the new era of rectitude to come. The spirit that ended the Rococo expressed as rigid a moralism as the Rococo had swept away. Watteau's great *Shopsign of Gersaint* shows a portrait of the dead monarch being packed in straw while the patrons of Gersaint's gallery, when they are not admiring themselves in ornamental mirrors, gaze raptly at fleshy mythologies of the sort Boucher was to carry to perfection.

Watteau's touch is as nervous as his subject, as though the paintings themselves belonged to the same psychic reality that was lived by his traveling companies of actors, or his amorists arising from the enchantments of Cythera, or his lords and ladies pausing to embrace or to execute a diversionary dance or to break for a moment the restless comings and goings of frantic and distracted days. How Watteau, out of seemingly random squiggles of pigment the color of clay and putty, should have summoned garments that shimmer like silk is one of the hopeless secrets of his genius. Fragonard's touch is of slashes and sweeps: one feels he painted with his arm rather than with the ends of his fingers, like a swordsman parrying his way out of a tight corner. Boucher, never save at the end much on the defensive, flourished in the noontime of this period, and he lays paint on with a sweetness and accuracy that reminds me of the way a master *pâtissier* would decorate a cake. The work is almost edibly delicious, and it is an astonishment how paint becomes form instantly and accurately, as in the leaves in the lower right corner of *Aurora and Cephalus*. The edges of the stroke define the edges of the form, so Boucher is realist and expressive at once and in every touch. With Watteau, you see either the paint or the subject. With Fragonard, the subject dissolves in the paint. With Boucher, paint and subject are in some manner both one and distinct. The brush strokes are not strokes as sword strokes are but as caresses are. Fragonard is like de Kooning when he built terrifying females out of slashes. The only contemporary painter who reminds me of Watteau is Philip Guston in his period of high Expressionism, when the work consisted of tense shimmers in shallow space. Boucher is like Cézanne in his clarity of touch, but more sure: an apple materializes through knowledge rather than through the search for it. And he radiates a sensuousness Cézanne repressed.

You might now begin to work into one of the paintings, perhaps *The Toilet of Venus* of 1751, from the Metropolitan's own collection. Venus is seated on an elaborately carved chaise, placed on a sort of dais, with an ornamental perfume burner at her feet and a park behind her, visible through drawn drapes of heavy green taffeta. Her body forms a gentle spiral, and her hair is being done by a cupid. Another cupid is fishing a necklace of pearls from a silver tray in the shape of a scallop shell, and a third cherubic attendant is engaged with a ribbon of blue silk. Venus is nude, but a throw of striped silk conceals her pubis. She is fantasizing, distractedly holding a dove, while another dove flutters at her feet. She is doubtless being prepared for her lover, but Venus is in no hurry, and one senses the preparation may be more enjoyable than the encounter. Everything in the painting is of something soft or smooth to the touch: velvet, silk, damask, satin, polished wood, the feathers of doves, the plump bodies of cherubic attendants, and of course Venus's own young flesh and delicate hair. The trees are like green clouds or moss. It is a sensuous atmosphere, but an oddly chaste one, and it seems to me in every respect a woman's world. Venus luxuriates as women tell me they luxuriate in beauty salons. A militant feminist I know used to withdraw to just such a space as Venus's of restorative indulgence. The painting was commissioned by Mme. de Pompadour, and was installed in the *salle de bain* of the retreat she contrived for her royal lover. There, like Venus, Mme. de Pompadour made herself desirable.

SPRING STORM, NYC

The rain swirls in like black pepper
burning our eyes, blurring the glass
that keeps the world out and the heat in,
turning the air into smoke,
into darkness,
and settling ashes on the river.

Packs of umbrellas enter the underworld
and catch fire.
Naked men duck through doorways
and blind women wait behind curtains
for the stormclouds rent with flames,
the thunderclaps rolling south.

By a fireplace, raking dead embers,
we echo the rumors flooding the city:
invisible hordes are looting
the laboratories for elixirs,
the warehouses for toys,
the furnaces for maps of the desert.

East to west the rooftops gleam.
Tar and water, unmixable elements,
combine to silver in the wind,
to dazzle other cities,
other planets,
with a skyline of foil.

Everyone is changing shape
inside his cage of rain.
Men simian and feline perform
trapeze acts and lose all fear of heights,
of water blackening and swirling skyward,
releasing them . . .

Nicholas Christopher

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It is not clear that she, any more than Venus, was eager for sex. History records a curious diet with which she tried to cure herself of a certain frigidity the king found in her.

The paint participates in the sensuosness it depicts, which must be why he was such a favorite, Boucher, with women who withdrew to caressing private precincts. It is sometimes held against Boucher that he is absent from his work, save on its surface, where his marvelous skill and power are palpable. And sometimes, just because of what must seem an obsession with soft feminine nudity, he has been charged with a certain licentiousness, for which there is no evidence outside the pictures themselves. My view is that what made him so successful was his uncanny capacity to represent a world from within feminine conciousness, looking, as it were, outward onto a reality of softnesses. He showed women as they liked to feel themselves to be: tender, warm, desirable, in an atmosphere of smooth and fluttering things and in a world without threats. Though it has been said that Boucher had difficulty with masculine physiognomy, I believe he rendered it as he did because that is how his patronesses wanted men to be—youthful, almost girlish, playmates in effect, like the lambs. They might like to hold these tender males in their laps, as in *Amyntas Reviving in the Arms of Sylvia*. Amyntas is safely incapacitated, and so can be held without danger against Sylvia's perfect, unthreatened breasts.

Because most of the masculine presences are maimed or simply harmless, I find confirmation that these are feminine fantasies; even when there is some truly powerful masculine presence, it is shown under a feminine spell. Consider Boucher's version of *The Rape of Europa*, shown in the Salon of 1747. He chose that moment of the story when the great bull feigns an incredible docility. Europa has allowed him to lick her hand, and has fed him herbs and blossoms. Now the bull is kneeling as Europa sits sidesaddle on a damask throw a cupid is tucking under her soft flanks. A handmaiden is bringing the necessary flowers, and Europa holds a blue ribbon loosely in one hand. The ribbon is tied to the bull's horn as though that fragile rein would suffice to tether all the dark muscularity of this paradigmatically masculine beast. Europa looks complacent, and her silken garment is thrown open to display the triumphant emblems of her femininity. Of course, the viewers of this painting knew that betrayal was at hand ("Men!"); that in a moment Europa would grip in panic those terrible horns in order not to drown in the waves as Jove bore her to her ravishment in Crete. The Europa we know in Western art is usually shown then, helpless and lost. Boucher instead shows her at a moment when it seems just possible that some mysterious feminine strength can subdue even this most powerful of brutes with nothing more than a fragile strap from one of her garments.

To confront true female power, you must pause before the great portrait of Mme. de Pompadour herself. It is a large painting, and at eye level one is looking into the deep hem of her amazing skirt, literally at her feet, next to her spaniel. The skirt is a cascade of scallops and flounces, in green silk embellished with nearly a hundred rosebuds. It is like a vast meadow, and as one follows its curves upward, one traverses an elaborate escarpment of ribbons to reach the glacial whiteness of her décolletage. Above that, set off by a circlet of flowers, is her clever head,

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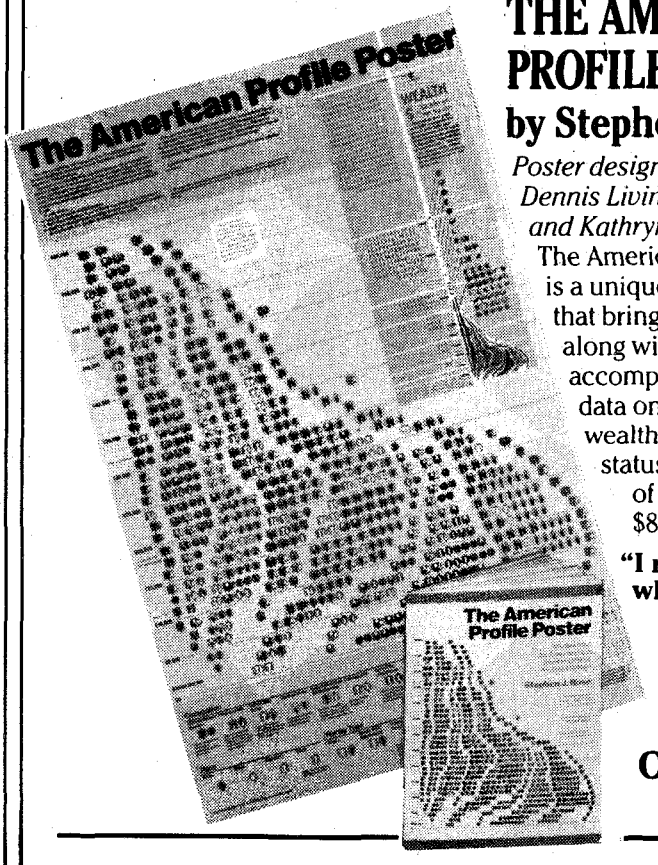

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gazing pensively out the window. Behind her is a mirror in which, by showing the nape of her neck, Boucher solves a problem that tormented Giacometti two centuries later. "When I see the face," Giacometti wrote, "I don't see the nape of the neck . . . and when I see the nape of the neck I forget the face." The mirror also shows a heavy bookcase, evidence of Mme. de Pompadour's intellect and literacy. She has let fall a book, and is surrounded by manuscripts and volumes of every sort, pieces of music, scrolls and, of course, the flowers that are the substance of her universe. Historically, the picture is poignant in a way neither she nor Boucher could have known. The books Mme. de Pompadour is reading must be by her favorite authors, Voltaire, Montesquieu and the Encyclopedists, whose ideas, at last, were to blow her world sky-high. Diderot, indeed, would become Boucher's most severe critic: he would condemn him for precisely the virtues he celebrates in this painting. I am moved by the historical vulnerability to which Mme. de Pompadour is blind, and I did not at all mind being, for a moment, at the feet of this remarkable woman. France, after all, was truly at her feet, and it is only right that the viewer of her portrait should be as well. The visions surrounding her, through which Boucher achieved his greatness, are her visions. Her power is attested by the fact that her fantasies represent her age, so far as we can know it from its art. □

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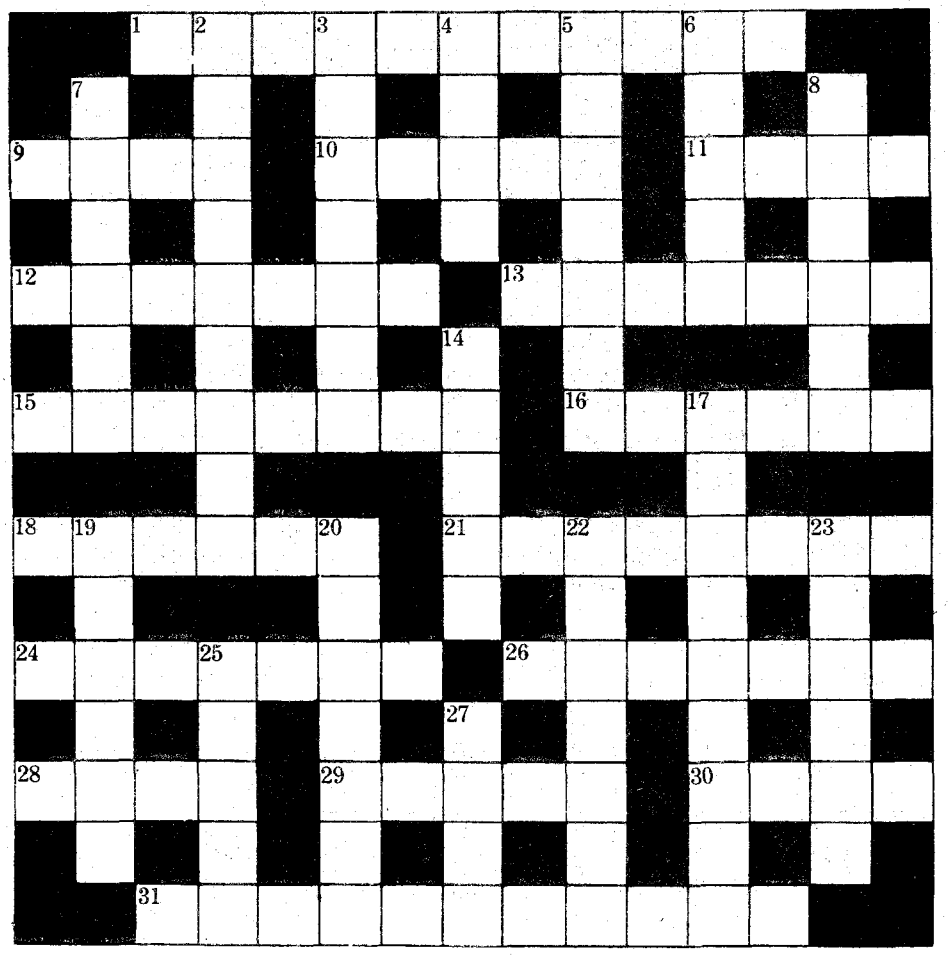
Crossword Puzzle No. 2097

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 and 18 This supposedly went down well in poetry and song. (3,3,5,6)
9 and 10 Pin down the records, possibly—they could come a little too close to the quick! (4,5)
11 Killed a large number, by the sound of it! (4)
12 and 8 down This might hold a lot of things, but you'll have to get in touch with Portland, perhaps. (7,6)
13 Who might arrest a private misbehaver when something's around to keep vinegar and something else at table? (7)
15 Matched up again, or just fixed like this? (8)
16 How some old folks might have measured the worth of the "chats," bilingually? (6)
18 See 1
21 See 3 down
24 Lassie or Sirius? (3,4)
26 An ingenuous representation of how Goering tried to leave many museums. (7)
28 A strong desire for Shakespeare? (4)
29 Amusement the soldier combines with things that might include smut. (5)
30 Dance related more to rock than the twist? (4)
31 Such things may cause abnormal effects, being "soul" where you might buy corned beef and a number of this. (11)

DOWN

2 Vehicle found only partly on the rails. (9)
3 and 21 across In short, how does he sound? Oh, I see! (7,2,6)
4 Congressman responsible for the distribution of funds? (4)
5 Is duress a sort of something we might feel when one takes us in? (7)
6 and 25 Not old sailors associated with English racing—rather associated with catharsis. (5,5)
7 Father-figure on the stage? (The French have a word for it!) (6)
8 See 12 across
14 Recognize as valid our time with German connections. (5)
17 In Belgium it suggests King Charles had a rich role to play with! (9)
19 More work, implying perfection! (6)
20 Do business—such as we don't like to get caught in. (7)
22 Such writing is not necessarily confined to four-letter words. (7)
23 Said with breathless eagerness "With Al, it's what we might step on!" (6)
25 See 6
27 The doctor might expect this jerk to show up with what Jack needs! (4)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules," send for those of Mr. Lewis to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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